

# FAST FOLK

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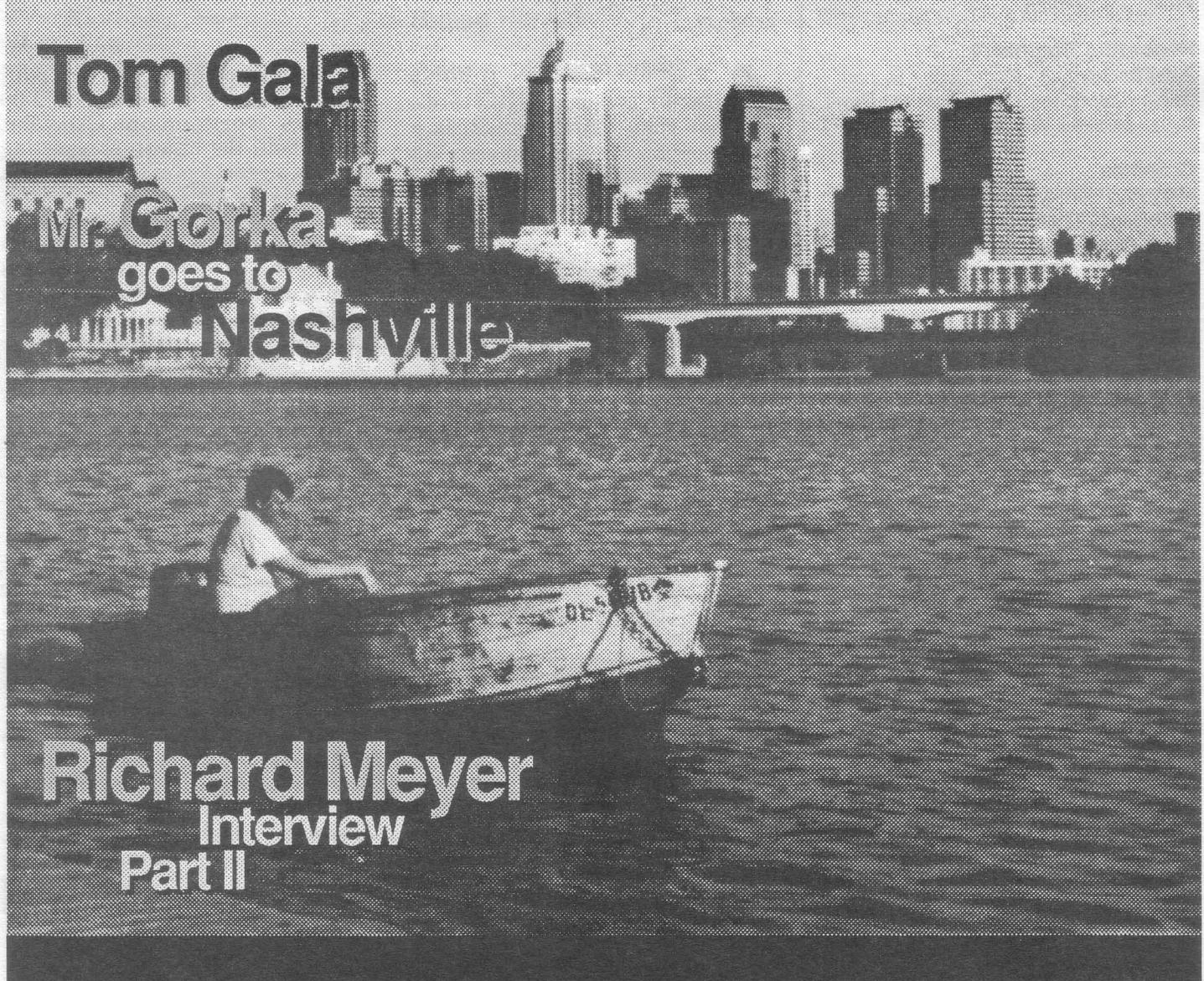
You Can Call Me ...  
**Album!**

*Philadelphia  
Phast  
Pholks*

**Tom Gala**

**Mr. Gorka  
goes to  
Nashville**

**Richard Meyer**  
Interview  
Part II



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# Feature

by Gene Shay

## You Can Call Me ... Album!

*I hope to clear up some confusion here. There appears to be a misunderstanding on the meaning of "album." The problem is that for years, many singer-songwriters thought of an "album" as an LP—the big, round, vinyl platter (may they rest in peace). Too many times I've heard young artists say embarrassedly, "Well, I don't have an album yet—just this cassette." Wait a minute. That cassette is an album, and if produced well, it might sound better than someone's scratchy vinyl product.*

**A**n album, whether it holds family photos, baseball cards, or John Gorka songs, is a storehouse for valuable material. But don't let the format fool you. A collection of 12 songs by Christine Lavin on a cassette is as much an album as the big, 13-inch LP. Same thing goes for the compact disc in its handy-dandy, plastic "jewel box." It too is rightfully called an "album."

So though the format may change from cassette to LP to CD—with newer formats like DAT, DCC, and record-to-disc on the horizon—the concept of "album" still holds for all formats.

Put it on your bio. Include it in your credits: "\_\_\_\_\_ has recorded three albums, the first available on cassette only, the second on LP and cassette, the latest release on CD and cassette."

**CD or not CD**

What bothers me most about the rapid takeover by the compact disc is the package itself. Sure, the sound quality is greatly improved, there's no wear and tear on the disc, and you can pack a CD with almost twice

the amount of music an LP could hold (I believe you can get 70-80 minutes' worth on one CD). But what about the human engineering factor?

Ever try to read the lyrics or performer credits printed in the CD booklet? The typeface is so minuscule it might pass as fly specks and is almost impossible to read. In many cases some hip art director decides to reverse out the text (white letters on a black background, just perfect for squinters), or worse yet, they use colors so subtle or so dense you need intense light and a 10-power Bausch & Lomb magnifier to find cut 4.

A CD's smaller size means you can't really see the pictures of the artist the way you could in the now-obsolete LP format. And have you noticed how some companies simply forget to include any liner notes, song credits, or other vital information when they issue a CD version of a classic recording formerly on LP? The Shanachie label is notorious for this. New compact discs of catalog favorites—Steeleye Span, Planxty, June Tabor—list nothing but the titles of the songs and the cut numbers. That's it. Please, guys, tell us more.

Perhaps the most frustrating thing about these wonderful new CDs is that stupid plastic box that invariably seems to crumble in your hands, that cracks off its plastic hinges every third time you open it, and requires the skill of a neurosurgeon just to slide the liner notes back under those teensy-weensy plastic tabs. Who invented this thing anyway, Penn and Teller? And why in heaven's name do they call it a "jewel box"?

I have a much better name for the sucker.

*Gene Shay has been producing his folk radio shows in Philadelphia for more than 30 years, now on WXPB and WHYY. He is a founder of the Philadelphia Folk Festival and has been a Festival M.C. since its beginning in 1962. A charter board member of the North American Folk Music and Dance Alliance, a record producer, and columnist, Gene is now publishing a newsletter called SingerSongWriter. For a free copy, write Gene Shay, P.O. Box 257, Wynnewood, PA 19096.*

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# Tom Gala

by Daniel Gewertz

*In the field of contemporary folk music, there often seems to be an official stamp of approval placed upon the American worker, and the work, specifically the blue-collar work, he does. "Work is honorable," it proclaims. "Work is the salt of the earth." This attitude is a vestige of folk's socialist past. It celebrates the worker as if he were a noble museum exhibit. Country and western also uses blue-collar work in a romanticized way, but less as a symbol than as a short-cut to legitimacy. Mention a trucker, a gas-station attendant, a waitress, and you're suddenly a believable spokesperson for the working class. (There never seems to be any mention of such workers as washing-machine repairmen or word processors in C&W; the more modern and specific a job is, the less mythically useful.)*

**W**ork is also essential to the songs of Pennsylvanian Tom Gala, yet it is a subject neither sentimentalized nor mythologized. Work is a central element to Gala like the sea might be to a landscape artist. It's the world he knows. Whether the foreground or background of a song, work means different things to each of Gala's characters. In his most upbeat work, though, his people are as thrilled to be thriving at a physical aspect of work as a lover or a motorcyclist (in the more generic pop songs) is thrilled at the chase. In a song from his current repertoire that takes place at a diner, the short-order cooks move with great speed, prepare delicious, imaginative inventions, and approach their public with witty friendliness, enjoying their skills as a dancer enjoys performance. In another song a car mechanic is seen, mid-diagnosis, as a happy wizard.

In most C&W, work is ennobling in a long-suffering, martyred manner; merely surviving the boredom, the haggard hours, the alienation, seems a heroic end unto itself. In left-wing

folk music, the quiet nobility of work is unquestioned. In Gala's songs, however, the virtue of work is how deeply a man or woman can enter into the process, finding one's nature and losing one's self in the doing of it. In some songs this process can get mighty technical, yet Gala's vintage-rock-'n-roll-inspired cadences and buoyant voice can make the details seem as easy as in an old Chuck Berry car song.

I took an L-88 engine out of a  
wrecked Corvette  
Punched it out 60 thousandths, put  
in a Fergusson fuelly set  
And then I traded this guy my guitar  
for the body of an old Chevelle  
And by the time I stopped swinging  
wrenches, I had a car that was hotter  
than hell

On paper this seems more like letter writing than lyric writing, but it all works gracefully in the hopped-up verse. The fellow singing the song "Rangoon Red" (the color of the auto) isn't really a race-car builder, but a factory worker, and his obsession with the car gets him fired in the song's final verse. But the

# Bios in order of appearance



## The Electric Farm

Joey Mutis III is a singer-songwriter from Schnecksville, PA. He plays guitar and sings in The Electric Farm, which also consists of Kris Kehr on guitar and mandolin, and Nick Franclik on bass. The Electric Farm has been performing in the Lehigh Valley area for the past five years. In 1991 they recorded 10 of Joey's compositions in the Athens, GA recording studio of John Keane, engineer and sideman for R.E.M. and producer of the Indigo Girls album Strange Fire. R.E.M.'s Peter Buck plays mandolin on these recordings while Keane contributes slide guitar and pedal steel; these recordings await possible future release. Elements of folk, traditional, country, and jazz musics in the Farm's sound can be traced to the trio's constant volunteer work at Godfrey Daniel's in Bethlehem, PA, where they have recently opened for John Gorka. Joey, Kris, and Nick continue to write and perform their original style of music to an ever-growing audience. For information and bookings, contact Kris Kehr, P.O. Box 5046, Bethlehem, PA, (215) 381-3546.

song's joy makes it clear that his real identity is all about cars.

That character in "Rangoon Red," who is seen "cruising and running on a Friday/Burned up 30 gallons of gas," gets "outlawed in three counties" for his love of speed. A similar driver pops up again in the infectious, immensely singable "Street Legal," a song about a guy whose run-down old truck never quite gets through an inspection successfully, a failure that always renders him an outlaw of the road. While the character's love of his outlaw status makes this song akin to C&W, the emotional pinnacle of the song is its catchy chorus, and those lines exult in the simple wish that the driver might one day be legal.

The other thing that makes this song different is its scale. While the song's wonderful jubilation and storytelling manner might make it seem like an epic tale is unraveling, in fact, all that's going on is one poor truck driver's inability to get an inspection sticker. This celebration of the small, the everyday, the specific, the real, is one of Gala's chief virtues.

Not every song revels in the glories of a job well done. Take "When The Traffic Light's Red." It takes the same passion for cars that is so exciting to the kid in "Rangoon Red" and twists it around. After a lifetime of twelve-hour days working in a shop, "it just feels like I'm promotin' somebody's favorite vinyl-topped dream," the tired mechanic says, his own dreams long ignored.

Do not allow me to give the impression that all of Gala's songs are all immersed in the world of work. Many only mention a job in passing, a reality mark noted on the way to talking about love, or home, politics, or neighborhood. Some don't mention work at all. But the sense of a real life is in all his songs. These songs are almost never ordinary; even the ones that sound pretty normal are quite unusual in lyrical content. Some need several

listenings to get, and not because of any symbolism or poetic vagueness, but because the song is sung by a specific man with a unique point of view, a view not tailored to the clichés and homilies of your average pop and country music. Some are less expressive and compelling than others, of course, but they all paint pictures of pondering men in complex times, and they all remark upon the sensual enjoyments of being alive.

Musically, Tom Gala's songs have far more rock-'n-roll dynamics, bluesy grit, and country-and-western ramble than your usual folksinger, yet his lyrics tell stories like the oldest of American folk songs, and his instrumentation is acoustic and spare. In concert, his partner Richard Drueding's guitar is a big, pliant presence. Even in a rockish song, the



spareness is sufficient; you don't find yourself wishing for a band to jump in. Gala often accompanies himself on drum-kit brushes, plunking them on his knees to establish rhythm. This isn't a colorful gimmick for its own funky sake, nor a tour de force display. It's just a simple way to get a beat going, and it serves its purpose.

Gala's voice is a warm, athletic instrument, able to get very pretty on the tender balladry, but more often a fun, rolling voice, a voice easygoing yet gritty at points, and ultimately expressive. Tom Gala is a troubadour with a message, yet also a musician who knows that fun and passion need to precede any philosophy. In that sense, his music resembles the work of his characters.

*Daniel Gewertz is a Boston-based arts journalist.*



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**Mr. Gorka Goes To Nashville**

by Barry Rabin

**or Doesn't Anybody Feel Like a Train Anymore?**

*I could barely believe my eyes. I had just come from a hard day's work, and, as was my routine last fall, I was preparing my usual semi-edible frozen dinner while zipping through the three hours of Nashville Network music videos I'd been taping every morning.*

I was about to set off on my third trip to "The Home of Country Music," a northern musical carpetbagger of sorts, trying to sell the folks down there on what I felt were a few incredibly good songs by some Yankee folk songwriter friends of mine. Folk music and country are virtually indistinguishable from each other at their point of intersection, I've always thought. Perhaps if I didn't use the F-word, I reasoned, I could convince some nice music executive to make one of my people very happy, or at least ambivalent but not totally broke, for a change.

Anyway, I had just fast-forwarded through Hank Jr.'s latest ode to heavy abuse of alcohol, and was walking back toward the microwave to uncover the cherry cobbler, when all of a sudden I heard it. *No way!*, I thought. *It couldn't be. No way!*

I wheeled toward the TV set, dooming the cherry cobbler to a soggy end. And there he was. Not Willie Nelson. Not Travis Tritt. Not Johnny Paycheck, whose recording projects these days reportedly must be cleared by his Midwestern parole board.

There, on my RCA 19-incher, right on TNN's *Video Morning* show, strolling down the railroad tracks through a camp full of homeless people, was

none other than John Gorka. *No way!*

Way. Mr. Gorka had come to Nashville, brought there by some nice people who called themselves High Street Records on the little credit thing at the end of the video.

At which point you may be wondering: who are High Street Records? And what's John Gorka doing on a country video network?

The answer to the first question is pretty straightforward. High Street Records is the new singer/songwriter moniker at a record company better known as Windham Hill.

Now you remember Windham Hill. They're the folks who calmed us down back in the early 80s, by taking the annoying little things—like lyrics—out of our music. Windham Hill made its first foray into the folk/acoustic, singer/songwriter market a few years back, when it released Cliff Eberhardt's fine debut album *The Long Road*, only to be, by all appearances, totally clueless as to what to do with it, or him.

The album ended up in the New Age rack in a lot of record stores, if it got there at all (and those of you who know Cliff's music know that he's about as New Age as George Bush is



## Susan Werner

Twenty-eight-year-old singer/songwriter Susan Werner grew up on a farm in rural Iowa. She came to Philadelphia in 1987, earning a Master's in classical voice from Temple University and earning a living on the jazz circuit. Her songs and performances are noted for their directness, humor, and musicality. Management: Golden Guru Entertainment, (215) 574-2900.



## Dan Hart

Dan Hart has released two albums on his own label, and is the founder of the Philadelphia-Area Songwriters' Alliance (PASA), a group designed to encourage the creative process of songwriting. He writes both serious and humorous songs. Several of the latter, including the one heard on this issue of *Fast Folk*, have been heard on the Doctor Demento radio program.

funky). While Eberhardt, an exciting performer and fine songwriter, was wondering what to do next, Windham Hill, to their credit, quickly sought folk/acoustic absolutism.

They came up with the High Street label (so as not to confuse the retailers anymore), said ten Hail Marys, and signed up Patty Larkin, whose music could be played in only the world's very coolest elevator.

And then they hired John Gorka, whose thoughtful lyrics and mellifluous tones have graced many a *Fast Folk* issue. In the past six months, not one but two Gorka numbers have been choreographed, filmed, and aired, not once or twice but regularly, on Nashville's favorite video network.

Which brings us to the second question: Why John Gorka? Has the Gork-man "sold out" somehow?

The why is, alas, beyond my modest analytical abilities. One could think of a number of folk artists whose music is more accessible (the word I like to use) to the mainstream American country audience. One could hardly imagine a liquored-up trucker, gulping down shots of Jack Daniels at his favorite roadhouse, screaming for the bartender to put a little Gorka on the jukebox.

As for the question of whether or not Gorka has "sold out," the answer in my mind is a resounding "no." To my way of thinking, an artist only "sells out" when he or she changes his or her music to cash in on the marketplace. Gorka's music hasn't changed a bit, as far as I can see. The songs are the same as they've always been. And if he can get someone to pay him some decent bucks to keep writing and playing his music, then more power to him, even if they do want him to croon on TV at intervals.

Those who think that anyone who accepts a mainstream-label record deal or appears on TV has "sold out" are the same people who think that Mary-Chapin Carpenter should have to get up and go to her day job every morning after working till midnight and getting home just before dawn. (Chapin, alas, loses some points here, for appearing with the forgettable Billy Ray Cyrus in the year's worst Dolly Parton video, not yet available in stores.)

Sure, Gorka has done the Nashville talk-show circuit, which I'm sure is a requirement of his new employment. But I'm happy to report that he hasn't actually *talked* on any of the shows.

He's sure to be given a waiver the next time around.

Barry Rabin is a singer/songwriter, lawyer, music publisher, and has a song in this issue of *Fast Folk*.



# Interview

by William Ruhlmann

## An Interview with Richard Meyer

Continued From Fast Folk Issue 705

**Fast Folk:** *How do you see the folk scene at present?*

**Richard Meyer:** What's going on now is, there are all these new people, and they are as developed as David and Rod and Cliff [Eberhardt] were in 1981. I think we are at the third generation. I think that John Gorka and me and Josh Joffen and Hugh Blumenfeld were sort of in the second wave, and I think now there's a third wave, Frank Tedesso, Richard Julian, Wendy Beckerman.

**FF:** *Seems like the '70s, the '80s, and the '90s.*

**RM:** Almost. I was talking to Tom Paxton about it once and I've read other people say that between the late '50s and, say, '63 or '64, there were not really writers in the Village. I was a weekend Village hanger-on and I used to go to the basket houses. You'd hear people playing bluegrass songs, traditional songs, and cowboy songs, and occasionally new writing, and although Bob Dylan changed all that, that generation of folk people in the Village were the bohemians who were of the tradition and maybe some of them were songwriters. Earl Robinson is probably a good one from that generation who was writing songs. Jumping forward about 20 years, I think the people of my age or Jack's, or Brian Rose's and Rod's, we know those guys. I went and read about that stuff in college. When I went out to begin playing, I played my own songs and maybe once in a while a traditional song. Now I think there's a generation that doesn't really even think about the traditional songs. They're based on—some of them are based on what John Gorka did, or they're based on Bob Dylan or what Holland-Dozier-Holland wrote.

**FF:** *In a sense, there's nothing wrong with that. If one is talking about a gradual loss of heritage, that's a shame. There's a certain freedom in that ahistoricism. But in another way, it allows people to start over. It's freeing, in a way.*

**RM:** It is freeing. If one says that one is an artist, then that's what you have to be willing to do.



## Part II



## Geri Smith

Singer-songwriter Geri Smith grew up just outside Philadelphia in Darby, PA. She began classical piano training at age five. At age 11 she taught herself to play guitar and began writing songs. By age 15 she was performing at college coffeehouses and on radio, and writing music for promotional films. She attended the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts and West Chester University, and sang and played in a number of bands, widely recognized for her songwriting and vocal-arranging skills. In the early '90s, she disbanded her last original band The Choosy Mothers, and began performing as a solo artist. Her most recent material reflects her earliest influences Joni Mitchell, James Taylor, and Carole King, as well as the later influence of Steely Dan, Renaissance, and various jazz artists. During 1993, Geri performed in New York at the January Songwriter's Guild Showcase with special guest Julie Gold, and at the NAPM Songwriters' Hall of Fame Showcase. She is currently receiving airplay on Philadelphia radio on WXPB, WMMR, and WHYI. She performs around the Delaware Valley area as a solo artist and with Philadelphia songwriters Essra Mohawk and Matt Sevier.

Contact Geri Smith  
(302) 792-9528

I think the songwriter scene has gotten hung up because there is no big audience as there was for the singer-songwriter in the '60s. Singer-songwriters expect there to be an audience now as there is for pop music. If you took the sales figures of a Tim Hardin or Tim Buckley record, they were pretty well established artists. But I think if we go out today and make those same kind of sales, we would be considered not as established as those guys were, partly because there's more competition. Also because the curve of commercialism has made it such that you have to sell many, many more records, probably half a million records versus 50,000 or 60,000 records then.

**FF:** I think there are a couple of other factors. One is that even if Tim Hardin wasn't a big star, he had written several songs that had been hits for other people. Second, he was working in folk-rock, that was perceived as being the hot popular form of music. So the odds on his maybe throwing off a hit on his next record seemed very good. The hot form of music today is rap. If you sell a folk-rock record, it's a fluke. It's also a perception of what the hip thing is. It works against you.

**RM:** Yeah, but it happens after the

fact. If you have Tracy Chapman, who's sold six million records, she's perceived as a rock 'n' roll star even though her album is almost all acoustic.

**FF:** Yeah, but when Tracy Chapman comes in, then an A&R guy can go, "Let's sign Indigo Girls." If Tracy Chapman's album hadn't sold six million copies, there are a lot of people that we like who wouldn't have deals.

**RM:** I agree with that, but the perception when you sell six million copies of a record, just by virtue of the money, is that it is a major pop release. It becomes a rock 'n' roll record, in the sense of the cover of *Rolling Stone* and ads on Sunset Boulevard, regardless of the music contained on it.

**FF:** Okay, but then you're just getting into the matter of terminology.

**RM:** It isn't perceived as a folk record. Not to wish her any bad luck, but if she had only sold 50,000 copies or 150,000 copies, it would be called a folk record. That's what I'm trying to say. That's one of the twisted little bits of logic that drives the folk scene crazy. We hear a record like that and think, "Oh, there is space for me," and then you go knocking on doors and sending in demo tapes and there is no room for you.

I had a series of experiences running *Fast Folk* that were instructive. I had a meeting with the guy that signed Tracy Chapman, with one of the heads of A&R at Island Records, another meeting with



Fast Folk at Speakeasy, 1984

the president of Cypress Records, and other major labels. I either approached or got calls from these people and they said, "Well, what's going on? Tell me about *Fast Folk*. Tell me what's going on in the scene. Who's the next hot person?" And because I was really excited about being the editor and trying to promote the scene, I made up tapes of people that I thought were great, including Cliff, John, Shawn Colvin, Michelle Shocked, Brian Rose, me, Jack, and some other people. Almost the same words came out of their mouths each time. They would say, "Well, Suzanne Vega made it because clearly she's better than everybody else here."

And then after Tracy Chapman got signed, I met Brian Koppelman and gave him a copy of our sixth-anniversary issue and I said, "Here, listen to this record. There's some great people on this. Listen to Tom Russell. Listen to—" I know I mentioned Shawn Colvin to him. I talked to him about a week later and he said almost the exact same thing—"You know, I've listened and I just don't hear anything very interesting. It's clear that the people who made it made it because they're better." You can argue about what better is, but my point is that everybody has a different idea of better.

There was always somebody in a major position in a record company to not be able to hear better until after the fact. This gets confusing again because unless one has an absolutely grounded view of what one is doing, then you see people having success and you become influenced to emulate that success. It's natural when one is beginning to be any kind of artist, you try to emulate what you think is good. I think there's so much garbage being put out by the same companies that put out these good things. You see it advertised all over, it gets blared at you in Muzak. It

becomes hard to distinguish what's actually good from manufactured and promoted trash. Without something like the *Fast Folk* scene or a grounding community, it's hard for an artist to survive that and maintain a clear sense of his or her work.

So many people in the Village have been signed to labels of different scales, from Shanachie to Columbia and A&M, that we can't really scream about the record companies anymore. In the middle to early '80s, people could say, "Oh, the record companies don't pay attention." The singer-songwriter was not it, and that is the company's choice. If you approach a company, you have to know what they want to do. I think that many people in the folk scene think they will just be plucked out of oblivion and be thrown to the top of the charts like Fabian was. The art is so tied into media and business that it's hard to appreciate good art without the business success.

I guess what I'm saying is that there was a sense on the scene that the companies owed the Village its due. Things have changed little by little. But I also think that the people who have gone on to major record deals were very directed to that end.

**FF:** *I realize that the folk scene at whatever time period along this continuum we choose to define*

*it is not the same thing as the cooperative, or the people who run Fast Folk. Some of the same people are involved, nevertheless. Isn't it fair to say, though, that the direction of the cooperative and the direction of Fast Folk was, has been, more the song and the songwriter in a kind of aesthetic sense, as opposed to something that says, "We're going to be a springboard for people to have careers" of any level? And in that sense, is it valid to say, "The record companies have been ignoring us, how dare they do that?"*

**RM:** Oh, they're totally separate things. Certainly Jack never said that, and I never said or believed that. *Fast Folk* was never supposed to be a springboard for anybody, although it has helped. I probably wrote in some of my editorials that I didn't believe that. If anything, *Fast Folk* provides a community to allow people the opportunity to record new

## Dave Orleans

*Dave Orleans is a park naturalist and director of a small environmental education center in southern New Jersey. He has blended his knowledge of and concern for the*



*environment with his love of folk music and storytelling to create an innovative style of educational entertainment he calls EARTHSINGING. EARTHSINGING is an energetic amalgam of upbeat sing-alongs, clap-alongs, growl-alongs, ballads of the New Jersey pinelands region, and old and new stories about the natural world and our place in it. An accomplished singer and songwriter, amateur Pinelands folklorist, and practitioner of the "upside-down" school of guitar playing, Dave has performed his EARTHSINGING programs for children and families at school assemblies, teacher workshops, campfire circles, festivals, and coffeehouses throughout New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. Contact Dave Orleans—The Earthsinger, 130 West Clearview Avenue, Pine Hill, NJ 08021, (609) 768-1598 (day), (609) 435-4229 (evening).*

songs who wouldn't get a chance otherwise. The purpose of *Fast Folk* was to document a body of work by a community, high and low profile, based on the song.

I passed on Indigo Girls. There are a lot of people who came to hang around SpeakEasy, and would record one or two songs, and then they'd leave New York. That's analogous to the blues singer that might have recorded two sides by the side of a field and then Alan Lomax would drive off and they'd never be heard from again. It's the urban equivalent. Just the fact that this is Greenwich Village and Bob Dylan came here as a self-described hobo and became a rock 'n' roll star, there's the onus that if you come to the Village that's what you're supposed to do.

**FF:** *I hadn't thought of that. I guess in a way it's a little hard to escape that as a mind-set or at least as something that one is aware of.*

**RM:** You used to be able to see it every Monday night at the open

mike. The fortunate thing, at least in the *Fast Folk* scene, is that people have consciously tried to avoid that. Other than the imitators' contest, I don't think anyone tried to adopt Bob Dylan's voice or lyric style. Everybody has tried in their own way to find their own particular voice.

**FF:** *But it almost sounded like you were saying that the record companies had a responsibility to come down to the Village and sign people, and they were shirking this responsibility.*

**RM:** No, the writers thought that the record companies had a responsibility.

**FF:** *Okay. Because you have talked to a lot of these [record company] people and know these people and so have I, and I've never found a conspiracy.*

**RM:** No, I don't think there's a conspiracy.

**FF:** *I think it's important that none of the people you've talked about has been able to follow up. Suzanne had a first album that got nice critical notices and did respectably for a first album. Her second album had a fluke hit, and she's had a lot of trouble selling records since then.*

**RM:** None of this is bashing the people who make it.

**FF:** *No, no, I'm just talking about literally in a marketing sense. Tracy Chapman's career in terms of record sales has gone right off the cliff. Shawn's second album hasn't really done anything.*

**RM:** There was an expectation when Suzanne succeeded that everybody was going to succeed. Not based on any objective truth. Just like not everybody got signed when the Roches got signed, and not everybody got signed when Steve Forbert got signed. That happened before I was around here, but I can see looking back what happened. It's a holdover of the Bob Dylan generation. It's like this gnawing little fantasy that if you come to the Village, it's going to happen for you.

**FF:** *If you really look at the '60s and you look at that group of people in the Village, then what you're really talking about are three A&R people, Jac Holzman, Maynard Solomon, and John Hammond, who were also all the guys of the Newport Folk Festival, along with George Wein. Maynard Solomon really could sign something because he really ran the label [Vanguard] and Jac Holzman owned the label [Elektra] and Hammond [of Columbia] was given his head, I guess by Goddard Leiberson, in 1961 to go out and sign—I don't know what—ten acts or something, and he signed Carolyn Hester and the Clancy Brothers and Bob Dylan and others, of whom one made it. But that's kind of*



## Susan Deckhart

*I can remember playing with the keys of the piano when I was little enough to have to look up to see them. I was adept at playing classical piano, taking lessons from age 4 through 12. When I was 13, my neighbors got a Kingston Trio record. I was so enamored with it, and asked them to play it so much, that they got me one for my birthday. I played music non-stop through some of college, and was known to take my guitar with me almost*

*everywhere. I played off and on through my yoga years until my son Danny was born in 1974. Through four kids, I picked up my guitar infrequently, mostly when I had the blues. When my daughter Emmy was 2, my interest in the folk scene rekindled, and I frequented the Troubadour Folk Club, where I have been on the Volunteer Staff since 1984. I play piano, guitar, clawhammer banjo, and mountain dulcimer. I occasionally write a good song, and am in the process of producing my first decent tape. I play guitar in the finger-picking style, mostly in open G and D tunings. I have a knack for making good arrangements of other people's songs. Contact: 205 Stanford Road, Fairless Hills, PA 19030, (215) 547-1124.*

*aberrational. It's not like all of the majors came down and started scooping people up, at least until '66, '67, and even then the deals were not very big. It was two specialty labels and one major with a fluke guy.*

**RM:** But I think it's always an aberration. Aside from the fact that there were really that many writers then like there are writers now. Eric Andersen got to his level, and Tom Paxton, too. If you look at any

Gorka being signed to a more middle-level deal, and I guess Christine [Lavin] and John together doing quite well in a situation that is not perceived as having the rock-star trappings, that's given the New York folk scene a healthier look at what possibilities are, that it's not just the top of a big label or nothing, but your own self-produced records.

**FF:** *In a way, if you look at all those things and trace it back only to 1982, 1981, you could say that the scene has been incredibly successful. If you look at the people*

that was so exciting in running *Fast Folk*. In one particular issue of *Musician* magazine, it listed the four top women singer-songwriters of, I don't know, maybe 1989, and three of them had come through *Fast Folk*. It was Michelle Shocked, Suzanne Vega, Tracy Chapman, and I think Toni Childs was the fourth. And what you're saying is true. A disproportionate amount of people from our group have gone on to some success.

I think that, even if *Fast Folk* had stopped at its tenth anniversary, if anybody decides to look back at that period of American singer-songwriters, sooner or later they're



artistic community around the world, whether it's actors or painters, there will be a few people that are distinctive—that doesn't necessarily mean that they make lots of money. But then there's the rest. It helps to have a healthy grasp of your community, which I guess is what I'm trying to get to here. In the last couple of years, probably with John

*of the '81—slightly before that, slightly after that—that generation of people you were talking about, a surprising number of them are making a living to one extent or another, and in that sense, you could say all that has been very successful.*

**RM:** And not only are they making a living, but they're being recognized as being the influential members of their community. That's the thing

gonna have to recognize that this organization helped them along in one way or another; either it encouraged them to be part of the community or it just said, "Here's a studio and we'll distribute records of you." If you look at the national scene, there are other writing communities, but they haven't had the same collective impact and they haven't developed the same kind of influential population that this one has.

# Lyrics

## Man of the Town Joey Mutis III

We used to see him in the town  
Fumbling around, asking for change  
I used to watch him from afar  
Drinking from a jar, while I was sipping  
fine champagne  
And I could see him with both my eyes  
Yeah, I could see and so could he  
Then one day to my surprise  
It turns out he was me

He used to bother little girls  
When Mama turns away, "are you  
frightened," he'd say  
If Mama pulls her by the hand  
Tries to reprimand, then he would turn  
and run away  
And hide in shame, yeah, I could see him  
Hide in shame, he was to blame  
Then one day to my surprise, Mommy  
calls out my name

So long to the young and the beautiful  
So long to the brave and the free  
So long to the young and the beautiful  
And hello to the true me

We used to see him in the park  
Stumble in the dark, fall under a tree  
One day I took him by surprise  
I looked into his eyes, and asked him if  
he'd talk with me  
So I could see with both my eyes  
Yeah, I could see and so could he  
Then one day to my surprise

It turns out I am he

©1993 Joseph M. Mutis III

## Irene Susan Werner

Irene will not be coming by at  
Christmastime this year  
Someone else will make the dressing  
Someone else supply the Christmas cheer  
Irene will not be coming by and it won't  
be like before  
It won't be the same Christmas anymore

Irene was raised on German and on  
homegrown Grade-A milk  
She cooked like Betty Crocker and she  
spoke like Lawrence Welk  
Irene knew Saint Jude personally and  
believed in Kennedys  
Her church was very Vatican and brutal  
on the knees

But Irene will not be coming by at  
Christmastime this year  
Someone else will say the blessing,  
sing "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"  
Irene will not be coming by and it won't  
be like before  
It won't be the same Christmas anymore

Irene had the big farmhouse with the lane  
that drifted shut  
Leander came and pulled us out and  
saved our frozen you-know-what  
A sea of Holstein dairy cows would come

home when he called them

In his honor now my brothers will go  
bald

Now Leander sleeps beneath the soil atop  
a prairie hill  
And though Leander sleeps, I thought  
Irene she never will  
'Cause she'll see the day I marry  
And she'll meet my first-born son or  
daughter  
Or she'll be proud that I'm a nun

I woke up just this morning and I felt the  
strangest need  
I tried out the Our Father and I brought  
the Hail Mary up to speed  
'Cause my world was held together by  
Irene and PBS  
Irene was doing most of it, I guess

But Irene will not be coming by at  
Christmastime this year  
Oh, we'll still get together even though  
she won't be here  
No, Irene will not come by but I  
remember all her lines  
So Irene may still come by  
So Irene will still come by at  
Christmastime

©1992 Susan Werner

## Understanding Blues Dan Hart

Well, my woman loves me one day  
The next she treats me so mean  
Yeah, my woman loves me one day  
The next she treats me so mean  
(But I guess it's due to childhood trauma  
Bad nutrition or bad genes)

Well, my woman is so cruel  
She's the meanest in all creation  
Yeah, my woman is so cruel  
She's the meanest goddamn drag-your-  
name-through-the-mud-set-fire-to-  
your-mama woman in all creation  
(But I suppose I have contributed to our  
lack of communication)

I got the understanding blues  
From my shrunken head to my shoes  
I can't get mad at no one  
Can't shoot my baby with a gun  
And if my woman fools around  
There's only one thing I'm allowed to say:



## Greg Simon

*Greg Simon has been writing great songs for over fifteen years. He was a part of the Chicago and New York folk scenes before settling in the Delaware Valley. His songs have been recorded by Anne Hills and Susan Werner, and have been performed as well by such diverse artists as Ilene Weiss and international star Yehoram Gaon. He also has scored a prize-winning film. He has performed from Chicago to Nashville, from NYC to DC, but he*

*considers the Philadelphia area home and plays from Allentown down to Wilmington, Delaware whenever he can. His songwriting has been compared favorably to John Gorka's and David Wilcox's. For booking information, contact Politico Productions, 124 Wiltshire Road, Claymont, DE 19703, (302) 792-9433.*

"Honey, when you do that I feel  
Upset, rejected, and abandoned"

Well, I could get even, baby  
Jilt you for someone half your age  
Or poison your pet canary  
So you find him lying dead inside his  
cage  
But the shrink says, "You need to find  
A more constructive outlet for your rage"

I got the understanding blues  
Gonna give the counselor some news  
I've had it up to here  
With "empathy" and "mirroring"  
And if he says I'm hostile  
There's only one thing I'm gonna say:  
"When you say that, I feel angry"  
Then I'll blow his bald head away

©1990 Dan Hart

## Mirage Geri Smith

Crossing the desert, hot blazing red  
It looks like there's water in the road up  
ahead  
When you get there you see dry  
macadam instead  
Didn't you know it was just a mirage

Fanciful dreamer stares through the glass  
Dreaming of the lover that she swears  
was her last  
Then she thinks that she sees him in a car  
going past  
Doesn't she know it was just a mirage

You catch yourself believing it's  
everything it seems  
Kind of like a fantasy and kind of like a  
dream  
Exactly what you're looking for, right in  
front of you  
Disappears somewhere between the  
horizon and the blue

I sought the protection illusions provide  
'Cause when I saw clearly, babe, I saw all  
the lies  
You know, one time I thought I saw  
myself reflected in your eyes  
Wouldn't you know it was just a mirage

## Toads on the Road David Orleans

Chorus  
Toads on the road  
Tellin' me it's just been rainin'  
Toads on the road  
Some o' them hoppin'

Some o' them just get squashed (*rude  
noise*)  
Some o' them hoppin'  
Some o' them just get squashed (*another  
rude noise*)

In the heat of a summer night  
A cool rain's fallin' down  
Toads on the blacktop keepin' warm  
I'm drivin' through the fog  
What's that up ahead?  
Why, it's hundreds of little . . .  
Whoops! Didn't mean no harm!

Chorus

Well, I'm swervin' down the back roads  
There's toads at every turn  
I wish they'd leave this road alone  
Officer, please believe me  
I haven't had a drop to drink  
Got a ticket anyway for tryin' to miss  
those . . .

Chorus

There's somethin' about a highway  
In the middle of the night  
That brings out  
critters lookin' for  
a meal  
There's a dead skunk  
in the middle of  
the road  
Being eaten by an owl  
And a big ol' possum  
playin' dead for  
real!

Chorus

©1982 David  
Orleans

## The Traveller's Song Susan Deckhart

Three travellers, they  
went out beneath  
the night sky  
They were seeking to  
pray, for the moon  
god was nigh  
They put out their  
blankets and they  
started to think  
Of the space between  
stars as black India

ink

One said, "Shall we think of the space as  
a void  
Or should we think of the stars as  
heavenly deployed?"  
The third said, "The sky is magnificent  
size  
But if we want to be wise we can't open  
our eyes!"

Chorus

But let us . . .  
Sing to the stars and let us sing to the sky  
And let us sing to the dawn, which will  
be  
Which will be coming nigh  
And while we are singing the whole  
night away  
The moon in the heavens will not cease to  
play

Well, they prayed and they thought just  
as well as they'd ought  
They spoke to the stars just as they had  
been taught  
And they found that the time had become  
very still

## Jackie Koresko

Jackie Koresko is a  
contemporary  
singer-songwriter  
and native to the  
Philadelphia area.  
She has performed  
at clubs,  
coffeehouses,  
colleges, and  
festivals for nearly

15 years throughout the mid-Atlantic states. She performs  
with guitar and Appalachian dulcimer, or sings a cappella.  
In addition to several cable TV and radio programs,  
including WHYY-FM's *Folk Music with Gene Shay*, Jackie  
has appeared at the Bethlehem Musikfest, Godfrey Daniels,  
Minstrel Coffeehouse, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.  
She has just released her first full-production CD/cassette,  
*Grateful Heart*. Produced and engineered by Bill Kollar of  
London By Night Productions, it features such notables as  
David Darling, cellist formerly with the Paul Winter  
Consort, and Flying Fish recording artist Jay Ansill. Jackie  
has been called "one of the area's most highly respected  
songwriters" by Steve Senderoff of the Bothy Folk Club in  
Philadelphia. Her greatest accomplishment has been  
surviving the toddler stage of her two children, Jason and  
Sage.





## John Flynn

*John Flynn first captured the attention of the music world in the early eighties, as a songwriter with Kris Kristofferson's legendary Combine Music publishing company. When the company was swallowed up by a larger concern, John returned to his native Delaware County, where he spent the next decade quietly writing songs and starting a family. With his new album, From This Hard Box of Time, John has burst back onto the*

*country/folk scene with a vengeance, capturing the hearts and minds of music fans and radio programmers alike. While choosing to play mostly to folk audiences these days, John continues to return to Nashville every few weeks to co-write and perform. Bookings and info: contact Barry Rabin at (215) 384-5400, or write to John at P.O. Box 71, Prospect Park, PA 19076.*



## Kathy McMearty

*Kathy McMearty was conceived in French Canada and now lives in a cabin near Valley Forge, PA. Since 1989, she has been performing her diverse repertoire in folk and acoustic music clubs in the Philadelphia area and the great beyond. Kathy will be recording her first album this year. For more information, write to P.O. Box 35, Southeastern, PA 19399.*

And while they were emptying they had become filled

Then the moon came across and it started to fly  
The travellers, amazed, they all started to sigh  
For it cast such a brightness down onto the lawn  
And indeed it was flying until the bright dawn

Chorus

©1986 Susan Deckhart

## The Great Out There Gregory Jon Simon

Catherine flew out to Senegal  
In her Malian motley robes  
In her voice were more colors than the rainbow she wore  
And her cheeks were sweet Irish rose

She talked of dancing in bars in Dakar  
To that African highlife jive  
Her ma said, "Girl, you're gonna get yourself killed"  
She said, "I'm out there, Mama, to be alive!"

Chorus

And when you get there  
Is there a there there  
Do people care there  
Will they let you share there  
Do the boys and girls do more  
Than break their toys and perm their hair there  
Send an update, Kate, to your uptight mate  
From your big wide world to my small flat state  
Tell me what you find  
When you open your eyes and your mind  
To the great out there

She sent me a card from Zanzibar  
From Khartoum and Marrakech

And then later that year some letters appeared  
From Nepal and Bangladesh  
In one, the words were laughter  
The strange ways we live in peace  
The next, the words were blurred with tears  
The famine, the war, the disease

Chorus

You see, I grew up in a small safe town  
And I'll probably die there, too  
What you know about us, it probably ain't much  
It's as much as we know about you  
Except I know a Catherine  
And she needs to know the new  
I spend my life wrapped up in my tribe  
Till she brings her world into view

Catherine flew back from India  
With malaria in her veins  
But the fire returned to her clear blue eyes  
Just as soon as it whirled from her brain  
I said, "Catherine, who will you be  
When you're finally where you are"  
She just smiled and said, "We'll see, won't we  
But there'll be more to be by far"

Chorus

©1990 Gregory Jon Simon

## The World Keeps Spinning 'Round Jackie Koresko

I was just a child at 22  
Living on my own, then I met you  
The hope of a lifetime found in a day  
And the world keeps spinning 'round

It's hard to laugh when you feel the pain  
It's hard to love when you see no gain  
But it's harder to walk out than it is to stay  
And the world keeps spinning 'round

There are words to be spoken  
And dreams fall to the ground  
And the world keeps spinning 'round

She was just a child caught up in a war  
Between her mom and pa down on Bender Road  
And the longer she stayed up, the louder they swore  
And the world keeps spinning 'round

My toast to life is a toast to youth

To the faith and hope, the innocence and mountains that it moves  
But it seems like the innocence passes on too soon  
And the world keeps spinning 'round

There are words to be spoken  
And dreams yet to be found  
And the world keeps spinning 'round

I feel like a child now at 32  
I can't say that I've done all I'd hoped to do  
But I go where the wind blows and the cup's half full  
And the world keeps spinning 'round

There are words to be spoken  
And dreams caught in the clouds  
And the world keeps spinning 'round

There are words to be spoken  
And dreams left in the clouds  
And the world keeps spinning 'round

## All The Way Home

John Flynn

Easing down a dirt road on the hard-luck side of town  
A four-by-four, a reformed whore, a preacher and a clown  
The clown was wearing grease paint, the preacher wore the same  
The ex-whore wore Bermuda shorts and mumbled Jesus' name

All the way home, children, all the way home  
You drop like a bird or you fly like a stone  
Shot by the slings made of all you have known  
You try but you never get all the way home

Reverend Jim said, tell me, Slim, why'd you become a clown  
Slim said, guess like most folks I just hate to see men down  
Cara-Sue said, I won't touch that line, and pushed her chin  
Back into her biography of Mary Magdalene

They drove out to a sawed-off shotgun shack back in the woods  
They went in one by one 'til by a tiny bed they stood  
Cara-Sue said, Momma, it's okay, we're all here now  
Slim opened the curtains up and let the sunlight out

Reverend Jim sang soft a hymn and Slim the clown just cried  
And placed his squirting carnation down by his Momma's side  
Cara looked embarrassed as she gently kissed the hand  
That slapped her on the first night she had ever known a man

They stood there for a while then one by one they raised their heads  
As plates they never ate from spoke to books they never read  
Then the silence parted, saying, "No one here's to blame  
She may not know you loved her but at least she knows you came"

©1991 John Flynn

## Sing Me A Song

Kathy McMearty

Sing me a song of innocence  
Sing me a song without tears  
Sing me a song of better times  
A song to calm my fears  
Sing me a song  
Sing me a song

Sing me a song that has no rhyme  
Sing me a song for one  
Sing me a song to help pass the time  
In all the lonely nights to come

You were the one I counted on  
The one my heart could see

Constant as the northern star  
Shining upon me  
You were the one  
You were the one

Sing me a song of shiny things  
That all too quickly fade  
Sing of girls in organdy  
And all the promises made

You were the one I counted on  
The one my heart could see  
Constant as the northern star  
Shining upon me  
You were the one  
You were the one

©1992 Kathy McMearty

## Street Legal

Tom Gala

Bald tires and busted shocks  
My springs are sprung, the king pins are shot  
But I'm still rolling, rolling on the road  
Wheel bearings humming their favorite tune  
Like a pack of dogs they're yowling at the moon  
I'm still rolling, rolling on the road

Chorus  
Street legal, I wish I could be street legal  
Street legal keeps eluding me  
Street legal, must be fun to be street legal  
Street legal keeps eluding me

## Tom Gala

Tom Gala was born and bred in Philadelphia, but like most Americans, his ancestors came from somewhere else—in this case, from the Ukraine and Poland. Mr. Gala grew up hearing the traditional polkas and dance tunes, and old, slow ballads of his grandparents' culture, but he heard a lot of other music as well. Later, popular songs, rhythm and blues, country music, songs from the "folk revival," and old jazz standards had appeal for him. Tom forged these musics together, making his own uniquely American style. His songs are steeped in the local environment, making them a kind of local sung poetry. The songs are full of references to Philadelphia places—old Shackamaxon Street, Thirtieth Street Station, factories and family court—and many voices of Philadelphia—the truck driver, the wall writer, the waitress who works at the Melrose Diner. Tom feels that there is great value in the things he experiences as he lives and works (as a tree surgeon) in Philadelphia, and he puts them into song.





## Betsy Moore Robinson

*Betsy Moore Robinson is a singer-songwriter from the Philadelphia area. From song to song there is a pleasantly surprising albeit subtle change of style. The unique combination of lyrics and melody create a strong bond that hits the heart and evokes reflectiveness. Betsy's songs touch upon the pain of lost love, while moving the listener beyond to a sense of rejuvenation.*

I get my truck repaired over at Jim's  
He only fixes foreign trucks  
They're all foreign to him  
But I'm still rolling, rolling on the road  
Me and Jim, we almost cried  
When I nearly passed inspection back in  
'75  
But I'm still rolling, rolling on the road

Chorus

You look down in my cab  
You see the road going past  
I'm in a glass-bottom boat only without  
the glass  
But I'm still rolling, rolling on the road  
I need a current license, a registration  
Traffic cops with imagination  
I'm still rolling, rolling on the road

Chorus

©1987 Tom Gala Music

## What On Earth For? Betsy Moore Robinson

Sometimes I wonder what on Earth for

am I here  
Hoping there's a reason for the things  
that I see and hear  
Good thoughts turn into doubt and then  
into fear  
And why does the laughter fall and spill  
into tears

Chorus

So hold on to what you have  
Raise your heart and be glad  
Don't try to erase the way that you are or  
the things that you feel  
I know that life is hard  
But that's how you'll come so far  
You are the sun, you are the moon, you  
are the stars

The winter was a hard one  
The April ground still holds the cold  
While I hold the memories of the late  
nights and stories you told  
But I'd be the last one to keep you from  
going away  
You see, I know what it's like to be lost in  
those ramblin' ways

Chorus

Time's movin' on, I'm not doin' the  
things that I should  
And I would forget you, if only I could  
But the words that you gave me I hold to  
my heart oh so dear  
You said life is to know love and pain,  
the laughter and tears

Chorus

So I'll hold on to what I have  
I'll raise up my heart and be glad  
I won't try to erase the way that I am or  
the things that I feel  
Well, I know that life is hard  
But that's how I'll come so far  
I am the sun, I am the moon, I am the  
stars  
You are the sun, you are the moon, you  
are the stars  
We are the sun, we are the moon, we are  
the stars

©1991 Betsy Moore Robinson

## The Gelding Factory Barry Rabin

There's a building in the back  
Over by the horse race track  
Every day it's whack, whack, whack  
It's the gelding factory

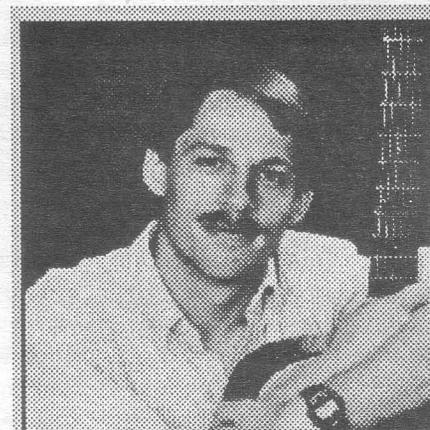
Angry female vets work there  
Chop off each and every pair

It might hurt but they don't care  
At the gelding factory

Chorus

And it's hi-ho, off they go, horses finish  
one, two, three  
Big fun, watch them run, 'round the track  
so gracefully  
And it's hi-ho, off they go, horses finish  
one, two, three  
But it's two (pfft), one (pfft), they're all  
done  
At the gelding factory

Gelders start at eight each day  
Feed those horses up with hay  
After that it's bombs away



## Barry Rabin

*A folk singer-songwriter as well as a practicing attorney, Barry Rabin didn't start writing songs and performing until after he graduated from law school in 1983. Ten years later, he has appeared in such diverse venues as the Philadelphia Folk Festival, the Nashville Network, Nashville's Bluebird Café, and Philadelphia's Federal District Court. Barry's songs deal with such subjects as surgical childbirth, condom manufacturing, horse castration, and hemorrhoids, all the while pointing out the absurdity and humor in our most sacred institutions, while decrying the epidemic of political correctness which threatens to render our society boring and humorless. For bookings and info, call (215) 384-5400, or write c/o Dead Parrot Music, One Bondsville Road, Downingtown, PA 19335.*

At the gelding factory

Each one works with careful hands  
Piling up those massive glands  
Trash man won't look in the cans  
At the gelding factory

Chorus

Well, horses walk in through the door  
No idea what they're in for  
No one wants to sweep the floor  
At the gelding factory

Women bring them from the pen  
Close their eyes and just pretend  
That every one's an ex-boyfriend  
At the gelding factory

Chorus

©1992 Barry Rabin/Dead Parrot Music Co.

## You Can't Go Home Again

Debbie Ansell

I had a dream last night when the moon was full  
And I was feeling more alone than usual  
I wanted to go back home just once more  
But there was no one waiting at the door

I reached out for my mama, but she's gone  
And Daddy, too, has long ago gone on  
I called out to my sister, but she couldn't hear  
I could see their faces but could not get near

Chorus

You can't go home again, it's really true  
And no one else can love you like your mom and daddy do  
Always lookin' for someone to care  
You can't go home again, if it's not there

I tossed and turned and cried myself awake  
But still there was this feeling that I could not shake  
I wanted for one sweet moment to be  
With the ones who love me just for bein' me

Chorus

I had a dream last night when the moon was full  
And I was feelin' emptier than usual

## Debbie Ansell

Debbie Ansell got hooked on folk music in the late '50s and early '60s, frequenting such bygone bastions of folkdom as the Second Fret and the Gilded Cage. This was the beginning of a lifelong love affair with music of all kinds which led her to a B.A. degree in Music Composition. Over the years she has been involved with a variety of projects: musical theater, co-founding a songwriters' association, and playing bass in a top-40 band. She has performed in folk clubs and venues throughout the Philadelphia area for nearly three decades. Currently she plays with her acoustic country band Rodeo Wind. For information, contact Debbie Ansell, 601 W. Cliveden St., Bldg. B, #213B, Philadelphia, PA 19119, (215) 844-2280.



## Ben Arnold

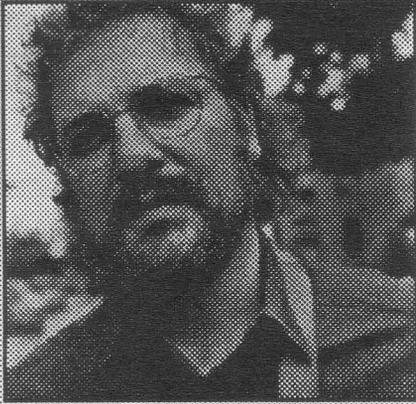
Ben Arnold has been living and performing in the Philadelphia area off and on for the past 12 years. Though primarily known for his rhythmic piano style, Ben is making his guitar-playing debut on this recording. A primary influence in the new-folk singer-songwriter renaissance of Philly, Ben is currently completing a full-length CD to follow up *Signal My Arrival*, which has been out for two years and has acquired much critical acclaim. Soulful and passionate, Ben always receives great notices for his live shows at clubs, festivals, and concert halls in the area. To contact Ben Arnold, please call (215) 483-4947.



## Kolleen Bowers

Producer James C. Tract says, "Kolleen Bowers is establishing herself as one of the premier singer-songwriters in the area. Her compositions are deeply revealing and reflective, tender and tough, woven around intricate melodies, enhanced by haunting vocals. Kolleen is one of few singers whose voice is an instrument unto itself. 'Eclectic' is the only word to describe this artist's material." Kolleen has performed at all of the major folk clubs and coffeehouses in the Philadelphia area. She will be in the studio this summer working on an EP to be released in the fall. Contact Kolleen Bowers, 35 East Wayne Avenue, 2nd floor, Aldan, PA 19018.





## Tom Juravich

"A rumbling voice and straight-ahead delivery" mark the songs of folksinger and labor activist Tom Juravich, according to *Dirty Linen* magazine. Best known as a leader among a new generation of labor singers and songwriters, Juravich is a singer whose rock-solid belief in working people comes across without hokiness or affectation. Their hopes, dreams, and struggles for a better life find rich expression in Tom's powerful and sensitive renditions of old and new folk songs. As Pete Seeger put it, "I am impressed by your wide variety of material and frankly jealous of your wonderful voice." Tom has released three albums to date. His stirring composition "Rising Again," title song of his first album, is sung throughout the world in many languages. On the Flying Fish label, *A World To Win* was called by *Sing Out!* an album of "finely sketched cameos." *Out of Darkness* is "some of the best coal-mining music you will ever hear," says Richard Trumka, President of the United Mine Workers of America. Juravich has performed at many of the major folk clubs in the Northeast. He has appeared with Pete Seeger, Tom Paxton, Utah Phillips, and Hazel Dickens. In the Philadelphia area, Tom has appeared at the Folk Factory, the Bothy Club, and the Troubadour, and at workshops sponsored by the Philadelphia Folksong Society. Tom currently serves on the Board of Directors of *Sing Out!* magazine.

Each time I see that big summer moon  
shine  
I'm reminded of the things I cannot find

Chorus

©1989 Debbie Ansell

## This Web That We've Spun Ben Arnold

You know my secrets  
And my hiding places  
You've hunted me down from the nest

You've staked out my movements  
And seen all my faces  
Most of the bad and the best

You knew my weakness  
And gave me a warning  
But you are the princess  
And I knew that by morning

Chorus

I'd go with the spider  
She's leading me on  
A merciless widow  
She hides from the sun  
Away from the window  
The torture's begun  
I guess that I'm caught  
In this web that we've spun

You've sprayed me with poison  
Still dazed, I approach you  
I'm drawn by the risk of it all

With your quick precision  
I drown in your passion  
I take one more step, then I fall

Now I'm caught up and tangled  
My wings have been shredded  
I'm hungry and broken  
But I still don't regret it

Chorus

Inch by inch you follow me  
Slowly down the wire  
Inch by inch you'll swallow me  
Then leave me when you're tired

©1990 Ben Arnold

## Flags Are Wavin' Kolleen Bowers

there's a train comin' after me  
and i can't run fast enough

there's a train comin' straight for me  
and i just can't drink enough  
there's a miserable situation  
tappin' on my shoulder  
there's a mean, old, low emotion  
just keeps gettin' bolder  
flags are wavin' at me flyin'  
i go by them

there's a headlight shinin' on  
something in the darkness  
there's a headlight shinin' on  
something cold and heartless  
there's a new load comin' on  
and to me it is directed  
there's a mean, old, low emotion  
can't be neglected  
flags are wavin' at me flyin'  
i go by them

i wish it was the angels come  
to teach me how to feel  
instead i find these angry dogs  
barkin' at my heels  
it's not the voice of comfort  
whispering in my ear  
it's a siren  
that's screaming  
of the suffering to come  
and i don't want to hear

©1991 Kolleen Bowers

## Let The Music Tom Juravich

Chorus

Let the music take you home, my friends  
May it stay with you always until the end  
Keep it with you for the trouble and the  
happy days ahead  
Let the music take you home, my weary  
friend

I know that lately you've had trouble on  
your mind  
And sometimes this old world hasn't  
been too kind  
You felt so all alone, you had no place  
you could go  
Well, listen just a little while, the music, it  
will take you home

And I hope that the singing has helped  
you some  
Anyway, I'm sure glad that you could  
come  
Be careful on the highway, yes I know  
you'll be all right  
Just let the music ease you through the  
cold dark night

And I hope I'll see you all before too long  
Maybe by then I'll have learned that

favorite song  
Just don't let those troubles get the best of  
you  
And I'll see you friends the next time I  
come through

©1993 Tom Juravich (BMI)

## Morning Person Lu Bango

i'm not a morning person  
i've come to terms with that  
i'd rather lie in bed  
and wrap you 'round me like a blanket

i'm not a morning person  
i'm not afraid to say  
it takes about 12 cups of coffee  
just to have me say anything  
in the morning, in the morning

so you're a morning person  
i guess i'd never know  
the way you greet the sun  
by dancing in your birthday clothes

so you're a morning person  
i guess i would agree  
by your bright eyes and bushy tail  
bouncing all over me, bouncing over me  
in the morning, in the morning

i've tried so many ways  
like splashing water on my face

i go to bed before the news  
i've raised roosters on my roof  
i've got nothing against the sun  
i love his warmth like anyone  
he just seems to come too soon  
and i've got something for the moon

i'm not a morning person  
sleeping should be a sport  
no need to wipe the stardust from my  
eyes  
or cut my dreams short

i'm not a morning person  
and you always watch me there  
you like to pinch my nose  
or stick your fingers in my ear, pull my  
hair . . .  
in the morning, in the morning, in the  
morning

## Water Come Down Susan Herrick

Water come down and soothe you  
River run down and move you

Did they hold out  
Did they make you pay  
Did they make you pay with your body?  
Did they pull you in and push you out  
Till you didn't know if you were wanted?  
I'm sorry for the things you've lost  
I know you don't want to lose more

Water come down and soothe you  
River run down and move you

Do you fear you must  
Offer up yourself  
Hold vigil in every moment  
Where did you learn that way to love  
Is it the only language that you know?  
Why would she go, this is perfectly nice  
here  
She wouldn't leave when you both get  
what you need

Water come down and soothe you  
River run down and move you

If you do not give your body  
They will not befriend your soul  
If you do not give away your power  
You will not be whole  
It's a lie they taught you when you were a  
little girl  
Who left you in the middle of it all  
Clawing and reaching for love—who?

Water come down and soothe you  
River run down and move you

©1992 Susan Herrick (BMI)

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otherwise noted



## Lu Bango

Lu Bango is a native of Wilmington, Delaware. His wry sense of humor and his playful way with words are reflected in his songs that cover a wide spectrum of themes: love, politics, coffee, and getting out of bed in the morning. He's also a very likable guy. He can be contacted at 25 Drummond Road, Wilmington, DE 19808, (302) 998-4122.

## Susan Herrick

Born and still deeply rooted in Chester County, PA, Susan Herrick has been performing her music with voice, guitar, piano, and drums since the tender age of thirteen, when she was a prodigy in a regionally-acclaimed women's band. Susan is also a registered music therapist who gives workshops to unleash the healing and expressive powers of voice. She has released two recordings on her own WATCHfire label, *Loving Me* (1986) and *Truth and the Lie* (1991—CD and cassette), and is currently on her second national tour. Contact WATCHfire Records, P.O. Box 657, Unionville, PA 19375, (215) 486-6139, FAX (215) 486-6326.



# Credits

1. **Man of the Town**  
(Joey Mutis III)  
The Electric Farm  
Joey Mutis III: guitar, vocal  
Kris Kehr: guitar  
Nick Franclik: bass
2. **Irene**  
(Susan Werner)  
Susan Werner: guitar, vocal  
Jay Scott: guitar
3. **Understanding Blues**  
(Dan Hart)  
Dan Hart: guitar, vocal  
Jay Scott: guitar
4. **Mirage**  
(Geri Smith)  
Geri Smith: guitar, vocal  
Jay Scott: bass
5. **Toads on the Road**  
(David Orleans)  
Dave Orleans: guitar, vocal  
Jay Scott: bass  
Susan Deckhart, Barry Rabin,  
Greg Simon, Geri Smith,  
Susan Werner, Ed Williams:  
Toad-Tappin' Singers
6. **The Traveller's Song**  
(Susan Deckhart)  
Susan Deckhart: guitar, vocal  
Jay Scott: bass  
Dave Orleans, Geri Smith:  
harmony vocals
7. **The Great Out There**  
(Gregory Jon Simon)  
Greg Simon: guitar, vocal  
Mary Kay Mann: flute  
Kurt (Congaman) Chiappardi:  
congas
8. **The World Keeps  
Spinning 'Round**  
(Jackie Koresko)  
Jackie Koresko: guitar, vocal  
Jay Scott: bass
9. **All The Way Home**  
(John Flynn)  
John Flynn: guitar, vocal,  
harmonica  
Jimmy Bennett: bass  
Susan Werner: harmony vocal
10. **Sing Me A Song**  
(Kathy McMearty)  
Kathy McMearty: guitar, vocal  
Jay Scott: guitar  
Joe Spinelli: bass  
Dan Hart: harmony vocal
11. **Street Legal**  
(Tom Gala)  
Tom Gala: brushes, vocal  
Jim Williams: guitar,  
harmonica
12. **What On Earth For?**  
(Betsy Moore Robinson)  
Betsy Moore Robinson: guitar,  
vocal  
Jay Scott: bass  
Jackie Koresko: harmony vocal
13. **The Gelding Factory**  
(Barry Rabin)  
Barry Rabin: guitar, vocal  
Jay Scott: bass  
Kathy McMearty, Betsy Moore  
Robinson:  
harmony vocals
14. **You Can't Go Home  
Again**  
(Debbie Ansell)  
Debbie Ansell: guitar, vocal  
Terry Rivel: guitar  
Jay Scott: bass  
Kathy McMearty, Jackie  
Koresko:  
harmony vocals
15. **This Web That We've  
Spun**  
(Ben Arnold)  
Ben Arnold: guitar, vocal  
David Pearson: guitar  
Chico Huff: bass
16. **Flags Are Wavin'**  
(Kolleen Bowers)  
Kolleen Bowers: guitar, vocal
17. **Let The Music**  
(Tom Juravich)  
Tom Juravich: guitar, vocal
18. **Morning Person**  
(Lu Bango)  
Lu Bango: guitar, vocal  
Eleanor Pollak: violin
19. **Water Come Down**  
(Susan Herrick)  
Susan Herrick: guitar, vocal

*All cuts recorded by Peter Beckerman at the home of Mary Kay Mann and Greg Simon in beautiful downtown Claymont, Delaware, except for "Water Come Down," recorded by Marc Moss at Target Recording Studios, Newark, Delaware.*

*Special recording assistance by John Gallagher*

*Associate Editor, Fast Folk Philadelphia: Barry Rabin*

*Recording console and Neumann U87 provided by Ed Williams Music and Sound, Wilmington, DE.*