

Roots Report: April Snow Showers Bring Music

Okee dokee folks ... Maybe I shouldn't have said anything. In my last column I mentioned the lack of snow over the winter. Well, spring gave us a little more. Oops! Or, maybe, it was just the "Cooler & Warmer" effect of RI's new ad campaign? I know it has been talked about to death, but we all have to admit that it is lame. I have a master's degree in graphic design and I feel I am qualified enough to say that! Was this just concocted to be ridiculous to garner attention on the news and social media? If I was a teacher and a Graphic Design 101 student handed that in that design they would fail! Ugh. I hope that Gov Gina realizes that she spent five million to get the world to laugh at Little Rhody. Couldn't she hear Carrie's mother's voice (Piper Laurie) in her head saying, "They're all going to laugh at you"? She should be fired. Unfortunately we recently lost the ONLY REAL chance of ever having a great governor. It was shocking and sad to learn of the recent passing of Robert Healey. Last election he made an impressive showing and if he ran again, I am sure he could have triumphed. Now we will never know. RI is a uniquely odd place. We are a tightly connected state - more like a big town. To really understand it you have to be from here. RI has a lot to offer and you don't have to look far, but you do have to open your eyes. And in the case of music, your ears. I hope this will be a lesson to ANYONE who has ANYTHING to do with hiring talent of ANY kind. We have LOTS of brilliant artists, musicians, writers or whatever you are looking for RIGHT HERE. We are the biggest little state, not the menopause state as "Cooler & Warmer" may have you think. Geez, Gina. Read on...

An all new Coffeehouse Music Series begins on Saturday, April 9 at Concordia Center for Spiritual Living on West Shore Road in Warwick. They offer an intimate setting and comfortable seating. They launch with a night of great music featuring the multi Motif Award winning Joanne Lurgio! Opening the show will be special guest, Loveday. For more information and upcoming shows, inspire over to ConcordiaCSL.com.

If you want to experience some great pickin' and a grinnin' then get to Sandywoods in Tiverton on Saturday, April 9 for Mile Twelve. They are a fresh, hard-driving young band beautifully walking the line between original and traditional bluegrass with their infectious groove and intricate melodies. Fast gaining recognition for their outstanding performances, Evan Murphy, Bronwyn Keith-Hynes, Nate Sabat and BB Bowness create captivating songs and daring instrumental pieces from diverse influences. For more, mow on over to sandywoodsmusic.com.

Over at Veteran's Auditorium, the FirstWorks Artistic Icon Series wraps up on Sunday, April 10 with singer/songwriter Rosanne Cash in her only New England tour appearance of the season with her full band. Cash's evening-length multimedia experience features music from her three-time Grammy Award-winning album, *The River & the Thread*. Featuring songs co-written by Cash and her longtime collaborator, producer and husband, John Leventhal, this album features "a multi-generational cast of characters: from a Civil War soldier off to fight in Virginia, to a New Deal-era farmer in Arkansas, to a present-day couple in Alabama. Inspired by the many musical styles associated with the South - Delta blues, gospel, Appalachian folk, country, rock, and others - this collection of songs is considered the defining work of her career." Also coming up at The Vets is the legendary Gordon Lightfoot on April 17. For more, sew over to first-works.org.

The Sweet Little Variety Show is a fun compilation of artistry that is presented every second Thursday of the month at Aurora in Providence. This month it is April 14. Music, comedy, burlesque, skits and whatever else they can come up with are the pleasing ingredients of the SLVS recipe. This installment brings the talents of Cardboard Ox, Bettysioux Tailor's Boa Girls, Elizabeth Keiser, Maceo Johnson, Hair Deux Oh!, as well as an episode of "Ups and Downs: Adventures of the Knight Skye Detective Agency." The Sweet Little Variety Show is in its 7th year of supporting local artists as a monthly feminist, anti-

racist, queer-positive, body-positive cabaret. Show starts at 8pm but you will want to leave time to find parking at Aurora. For more, drop a line to sweetlittleemail@gmail.com or go fish on Facebook.

About 28 years ago I went to Stone Soup for the first time. My friend Barb Schloff was opening for a guy named John Gorka. I had no idea who he was, but I was going to the show to support her. If you don't remember Barb, you missed out on a wonderful talent - she has since retired from music. Barb played her set, which was amazing as always, and then Gorka took the stage. Right from the first notes of his music I was captivated. His rich baritone voice and steady guitar playing brought his lyrics to life. Gorka had just one CD available at that time, *I Know*, and I bought it. It is still one of my all time fav CDs. I used to listen to it over and over while I was in painting class in college. Since then John Gorka has become an internationally acclaimed singer-songwriter, has released over a dozen CDs and toured extensively. He will make a stop on his current tour at Common Fence Music in Portsmouth on Saturday, April 16. "Gorka is an honored icon of the folk tradition and a series favorite at Common Fence Music. His unique songcraft weaves a magical spell. He pays attention to the details that effectively evoke a time, place, person or range of emotions."

If you have yet to check out Common Fence Music, this is as good a time as any. They have done some remodeling at the hall and the stage size has increased about 25%. CFM is a BYO beverage and food venue. Folks frequently bring picnic dinners, wine and beer. There isn't a bad seat in the venue and the sound is top notch. I can say this from personal experience as I just performed at CFM. They also sell seasonal soups, homemade desserts and soft-drinks if you don't want to pack it. For more about CFM, branch out to commonfencemusic.org.

At Lily Pads in Wakefield it's Roosevelt Dime on April 16. Seamlessly combining the feel-good groove of classic rhythm and blues with acoustic Americana instrumentation, Roosevelt Dime has an infectious style and sound truly their own. Eben Pariser fronts the band with soulful vocals, belted and whispered with a passion and panache straight from the juke joints. Andrew Green's innovative piano-inspired banjo style, equal parts boogie-woogie and bluegrass, lock in with the New Orleans clave rhythms of Tony Montalbano's drums and Craig Akin's syncopated upright bass. The swampy chords and swinging blues lines of Pariser's electric guitar thicken the sound further. Armed with relevant and original songs of hope, love and conviction that sound birthed from the cradle of American music, their performances are crowd-pleasers. Opening the show will be Mark Mandeville and Raianne Richards. For more, double nickel to musicatlilypads.org.

That's it for now. You can catch my band Forever Young at Sandywoods in Tiverton on Friday, April 8, and I will be opening for my friend Sarah Potenza Crossman at Chan's in Woonsocket on April 22. Go Bernie!!!

Thanks for reading. JohnFuzek.com