

Roots Report: December music

Okee dokee folks... 'Tis the season once again. I am still in the trenches fighting the war on Christmas. After over 35 years in the battle, I have now earned five-star general status. In spite of my disdain for the holidays, I must acquiesce and write some "Christmasy" stuff here for you folks who celebrate. This year I will spare you the usual "Johnny Scrooge-ek's" view of the holidays. Humbug! Read on...

I always try to include this in my December column because I like to promote events that help animals. Every year around this time, musician **John Speziale** holds a fundraiser for the cute critters. The ninth annual Rock and Roll Christmas Benefit Stand Up for Animals will take place Sunday, Dec 11 at The Knickerbocker in Westerly. Speziale's Mr. Santa puppet issued a statement about this year's show: "We made big decisions today, bigger than anything, and everybody agrees how big they are. All designed to make our event more fun than ever. Big decisions - and important - did I say important? Very, very important. Because this thing is going to be so spectacular... Really, really big. Bigger than anything!" Scheduled to appear are John Speziale and friends, as well as The Carleans. The benefit always has lots of great music, contests, food, and fun. It's all for a good cause. *For more, roll over to knickmusic.com.*

Providence-based piano player and singer-songwriter **Shannon Corey** brings her Swinging Christmas Show to the Music Mansion in PVD on Dec 17. Corey has toured and sung with Stephen Stills, as well as opening for Lady Gaga. Shannon and friends will be playing selections from her *I Wish I Had A River* holiday CD and other swinging Christmas classics. *For more, skate over to shannoncoreymusic.com.*

The RI Bluegrass Alliance (RIBA) is having a holiday potluck pickin' party on Dec 11! Celebrate the season by jamming with fellow RIBA members and enjoy plenty of food, picking, and music! Come to play or just to listen. Please bring an appetizer, entree, salad, or dessert. Cash bar. They are also collecting coats, hats, gloves, socks, and sweatpants - any warm clothing for adults and children ages 3-12 for donations to Crossroads in PVD. Please bring your donations to the party. It all takes place at the Elks Lodge 2285, 42 Nooseneck Hill Road, West Greenwich. *For more, resonate to ribluegrass.org.*

The 15th Annual **Singing For Shelter** is on Thursday, Dec 8, at Channing Church in Newport. Hosted by local musicians, this acoustic Christmas concert will benefit Lucy's Hearth and The McKinney Shelter. Doors open at 6:30 and music starts at 7pm. Scheduled performers include Jimmy Winters, Chuck and Toni Ciany, Mel, Leslie Grimes and Matt Bruneau, John Monllos and Joanne Rodino, Tom Perrotti and EmmaLee Holmes-Hicks, Carrigan Nelson and Steve Rodrigues, Julie Bisbano, Diane and Chris Myers, Rand Bradbury, Dragonfly Marie, Ed McGuirl with Joe Lambiase, Jack Moore and Jim Chapin, Ray Davis and Mark T. Small, Jack Casey, Ed Ledwith, Fastnet Irish Session Crew and the Singing For Shelter All-Stars. *For those unable to attend, donations can be made at lucyshearth.org and mckinneyshelter.org.*

Recently, I did a couple of interviews for my **Roots Report podcast** with folks promoting new projects. The first one was with Billy Mummy. He portrayed Will Robinson on the 1960s TV show "Lost In Space." Mummy just published his autobiography, titled *Danger Will Robinson: The Full Mummy*. Those who only know Mummy from "Lost In Space" only know part of the story of this very accomplished actor, musician, and producer. Mummy was part of the golden age of television and worked with the legends of that era. He is also a very accomplished musician and has had many bands that include Barnes & Barnes, best known for their Dr. Demento hit, "Fish Heads" and his current band The Action Skulls with Vicki

Peterson (The Bangles) and John Cowsill of the Cowsills. In addition to that, he has worked with the band America many times over the years. I was provided excerpts of Bill's autobiography, and with so many tales to tell, his writing kept me very engaged. The book is over 400 pages of stories and 250 photos from this legend's life. *For more, Jupiter 2 to: billmummy.com.*

The other interview for the podcast was with RI Music Hall of Fame inductee and founding member of the Cowsills, **Bob Cowsill**. It has been decades, but the Cowsills have just released a new album titled *Rhythm Of The World*. The eleven-song recording highlights the writing and trademark genetic harmonies of the band. Whether you are a new or old fan of the band, this is a must-have for your music collection. *For more, take "The Path Of Love" to: cowsill.com. [Look at that: We tricked John into making a gift recommendation - ed]*

Celebrate(?) the holidays with a **John Waters Christmas!** The filmmaker, writer, actor, and artist will be at the Columbus Theatre on Dec 10 with his show. I had a chance to have a short conversation with Waters about what to expect at this performance. Listen to it on my *Roots Report* podcast! *For more about the show, flamin-go to: columbustheatre.com.*

Listen to interviews with Billy Mummy, Bob Cowsill, John Waters, and lots of others on the *Roots Report* podcast, presented by Motif: motifri.com/rootsreportpodcast. I am always uploading new ones, so please listen! MotifRI.com/RootsReportPodcast. You can find my concert photographs at motifri.com/fuzeksfotos. That's it for now. Thanks for reading. johnfuzek.com