
The Sunspot Concert Series

The Sunspot concert series at The Lyceum showcases well-known musicians from the United States and around the globe, representing all styles of traditional and contemporary folk music. The series also presents new artists who are just starting to make an impact in the music world. With its intimate setting and rich acoustics, the Lyceum Lecture Hall provides an ideal meeting place for artists and audiences to share a unique musical experience.

If there is a particular performer you would like to see featured in a Sunspot concert, let us know by visiting our web site and leaving a comment in our guest book or by sending us an email at info@sunspotpro.com.

Thank You

Thanks are due to all the people who, whether they know if or not, have entertained and inspired us over the years and supported and advised us in recent months, particularly Barbara Ryan and Bernard Argent, Fred Boyce and Kenyon Hunter at the Prism, David Eisner and all at the Institute for Musical Traditions, Mary Cliff, Jeri Goldstein, Bob Schurk and Nicole Quinn of the Lyceum, our old friends who have volunteered their time to help or simply tolerated our inattention, our new friends in and around Alexandria, and especially the musicians who make the music their life's work.

Thank you Karan for all your songs, but particularly for singing *The Ballad of Accounting*.

We own an immeasurable debt to our dear friend and teacher Peter Max, to whom we bid farewell this past Friday.

The Lyceum

In 1839, a group of gentlemen calling themselves The Alexandria Lyceum joined with the Alexandria Library Company to build a grand hall to provide a place for lectures, scientific experiments and quiet reading.

Eventually, the building itself became known as The Lyceum and, since that time, it has been a Civil War hospital, a private home, an office building and the nation's first Bicentennial Center. In 1985, The Lyceum became Alexandria's History Museum, providing exhibitions, school programs, lectures and concerts, volunteer opportunities and space for rental functions for the community. The Lyceum Museum Shop carries a wide variety of maps, books, note cards and special items related to Alexandria's history. The present-day Lyceum Company serves the museum as a membership and fund-raising organization. Visit <http://oha.ci.alexandria.va.us/lyceum/> to learn more about the Lyceum.



Sunspot Production • www.sunspotpro.com
Voice Mail & Pager: 800 404-9049 • Fax: 703 620-3803 • email: info@sunspotpro.com



SUNSPOT PRODUCTION
Promoting American and World Roots Music



The Karan Casey Band

Sunday, March 20, 2005 • 8 PM

The Lyceum

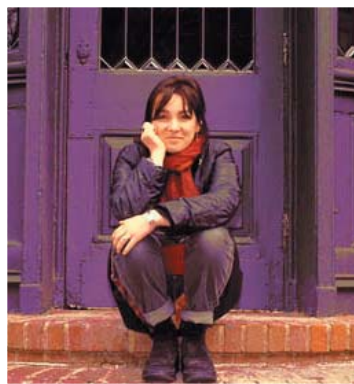
201 S. Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314



The Karan Casey Band

As a member of Solas for four and a half years, Karan Casey has been critically acclaimed from Japan to America as one of Ireland's greatest singers. *The Wall Street Journal* has described her as one of the true glories of Irish music today. Her current band includes Niall Vallely, a virtuoso concertina player, guitar wizard Robbie Overson, multi-instrumentalist Paul Meehan on bouzouki, guitar, banjo and mandolin and bassist Chico Huff.

Karan has learned from a variety of musical sources, starting with church choir and local mentors Lupeta Sheenan and the Foran Family in her own parish Ballyduff Lower. After moving to Dublin for university studies in Italian and Classics, she also trained in piano and voice at the Irish School of Music and The Royal Irish Academy of Music. Meanwhile she sang in the jazz band Bourbon Street, was the resident singer in George's Bistro for two years and performed her own original songs with the group Dorothy.



In 1993 Karan emigrated to New York and began a jazz degree in Brooklyn's Long Island University. Making the rounds of the sessions in New York, she was asked to join Atlantic Bridge. Later she joined Seamus Egan, Winifred Horan, John Doyle and John Williams to form the group Solas. The band recorded three albums in just four years, and won NAIRD awards for each. They played with Bela Fleck, Iris De Ment, Jerry Douglas, Stuart Duncan, The Chieftains, Donal Lunny, Sharon Shannon and Paul Winter while touring extensively in America, Europe and Japan.

Solas made its official debut at Georgetown University in 1995. They became an annual favorite at the Washington Irish Festival at Wolf Trap and in Gaithersburg and performed at other local venues, including the Smithsonian and the Birchmere.

During this period Karan recorded her first solo album, *Songlines*, and also found time to do some solo touring in Ireland. Other recordings include the Grammy-winning *Celtic Solstice* with Paul Winter and Friends (Best New Age Album 1999), and the PBS documentary (and Rykodisc album) *Africans in America* with Sweet Honey in the Rock's Bernice Johnson Reagon.

In her second solo album, *The Winds Begin to Sing*, Karan explored the boundaries of traditional Irish song. Fully versed in the genre's subtleties (and comfortable singing several selections in Gaelic), she showed that she is equally at home while transforming Billie Holiday's jazz classic *Strange Fruit* into a chilling Irish ballad from beyond the Pale.

Karan's third album, *Distant Shore*, featured a mix of traditional and contemporary material from Ireland and America. The band was joined by Dirk Powell, Michael McGoldrick, Dezi Donnelly and Niall's brother Cillian Vallely (of Lunasa). Guest vocalists included Tim O'Brien, John Spillane and Karen Mattheson of the Scottish band Capercaillie, with whom Karan performed a stunning duet on the puint-a-beul *Lord MacDonald's* (a Scottish mouth music song).

Karan is just releasing her fourth album, *Chasing the Sun*.

Niall Vallely's fearless exploration of the concertina's undiscovered capabilities has helped redefine its role in Irish music. Based since 1988 in Cork City, Niall was a founding member of the well-known group Nomos. He also played a prominent part in Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin's 'River of Sound' television project and has performed in recent years with piping great Paddy Keenan and bluegrass mandolinist Tim O'Brien.

Robbie Overson has over 20 years of experience in traditional music as well as a solid grounding in the jazz and rock idioms. Robbie joined the band Scullion in 1986. Alongside singer-songwriter Sonny Condell and filmmaker and broadcaster Philip King, they delighted audiences with their exceptional live performances. Robbie has played with various artists such as Eleanor Shanley, Sean Keane and Eoin Duignan.

Paul Meehan has recorded two albums as member of North Cregg and appeared on Niall Vallely's solo album. While continuing to tour with Karan, he has joined the Irish band Lunasa, performing with them recently at the Birchmere.

Chico Huff has been playing electric bass for over 25 years, and has worked and recorded with James Taylor, Carly Simon, Seamus Egan, Solas and Cathie Ryan.

Coming up...

Cathie Ryan, Sunday, May 29.

The *New York Daily News* recently stated that Cathie Ryan is "firmly in the upper echelons of Irish music singers." For fans who have been following Cathie since her early days with Cherish the Ladies, this is proof of what they've known for years: she is a major artistic talent, equally at home amid the deepest strains of the Irish tradition or the cutting edge of the contemporary songwriter movement.



Cathie's trio also includes Hanneke Cassel on fiddle and keyboard and Greg Anderson on guitar. For tickets, go to www.sunspotpro.com

Please turn off all cell phones, pagers and other electronic noisemakers.
No flash photography or audio or video recording of the performance without permission from the artist and Sunspot Production.



We appreciate the support of the Courtyard Alexandria.

Please help yourself to complimentary tea and Misha's coffee.