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To ask questions or to  
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# **Folk** **NOTES**

July - September 2023



## **Events in This Issue**

- 7/8: Mike Mullins &  
Forest Sun
- 7/21: Larry & Joe
- 8/5 Zzymzzy Quartet
- 8/25: Dear Darling
- 9/15 Mari Black
- 9/30 Gadan
- 10/6: Sofia Talvik

## **Try it, you'll like it!**

For many years, we have asked our audience to be a little adventurous. We all have our favorite musical styles, and we tend to avoid listening to anything that doesn't fit within those preferences.

Many of the concerts described in this issue feature performers who are new to our stage, and their music might not be exactly what you're used to hearing. We would like to challenge you to try something different. Pick one of the concerts that isn't in a genre you usually attend and take a chance. We believe that everything we present is high quality, so who knows? You might just surprise yourself and discover that you enjoy the show.

By the way, extra credit if you remember the commercial that the headline above is quoting and can name the product.

# San Diego Folk Heritage Concerts

For more information on any concerts listed, email [sdfh@san.rr.com](mailto:sdfh@san.rr.com).

## ADVANCE TICKET SALES

You can now purchase tickets online for any of our concerts.

Go to:

**[www.ticketweb.com](http://www.ticketweb.com)**

and search for the name of the performer, or just click on the ticket link on our web site.

You can also reserve seats by emailing [sdfh@san.rr.com](mailto:sdfh@san.rr.com).

## Saturday, July 8

Pilgrim United Church of Christ  
7:30 pm -- \$18 (\$15 members)

### Mike Mullens and Forest Sun

Mike and Forest have been collaborating since 2016, and it shows. Mike will kick off the concert, showing us some of his instrumental virtuosity, then will spend the bulk of the evening backing Forest on guitar, mandolin, and mandola.

**Mike Mullins**, San Francisco Bay Area native and current Los Angeles-area resident, has been a fixture on the West Coast acoustic music scene for over forty years. Well-known for his guitar work with the Cache Valley Drifters (Bill Griffin and Wally Barnick), Mike is a highly-regarded instrumentalist and songwriter and has appeared

on over 100 studio albums. In 2014, Mike released his first solo project, *Windows of Time*, a compendium of Americana styles showcasing a trove of original material over a twenty-five-year span. In addition to acclaim as a solo and ensemble artist, Mike is widely regarded as a top-tier mandolinist, and spent multiple summers as an artist-in-residence at the Annual Mandolin Symposium hosted by David Grisman and Mike Marshall. He was also a featured performer at the 2019 and 2021 Far West Folk Alliance Conferences. Mike's newest project, *8-String Sketches*, a tour-de-force collection of solo mandolin pieces, was released in 2021 on David Grisman's Acoustic Oasis Records, and is currently enjoying wide United States and international roots and Americana radio airplay.

**Forest Sun** was born in upstate New York to folksinging back-to-the-land hippie parents. His dad used to chop wood with neighbor Garth Hudson of the Band and literally built the floor that Bob Dylan stood on at manager Albert Grossman's Bearsville studios in

Woodstock, New York. Weaned on a diet of Jackson Browne and Toots and the Maytals, some of Forest's earliest memories are of his dad playing *Poncho and Lefty* by Townes Van Zandt and his mom singing Elizabeth Cotton's *Freight Train*.



With over 78 million plays on Pandora, Forest now enlivens audiences around the globe with his wealth of songs and stories, all sung and told in a laid-back California style. His soulful music draws on a deep well of Americana and is compared to everyone from Jack Johnson and The Avett Brothers to Van Morrison and Bob Dylan. He has played festivals from California (Strawberry Music Festival, American River Music Festival) to Europe (Belladrum in Scotland, Fiesta City in Belgium), opened for such luminaries as Lyle Lovett, Bonnie Rait, Steve Earle, Keb Mo, and toured with folks like Brett

Dennen, Mason Jennings, and the Beach Boys. Musical collaborations on his records include members of Bob Dylan's band, members of Calexico/Iron and Wine, Heather Masse (The Wailin' Jennys, Prairie Home Companion), Jolie Holland (The Be Good Tanyas), JT Nero (of Birds of Chicago), Sean Hayes, jam band ALO, and bluegrass band Hot Buttered Rum.

**Friday, July 21**

*Templars Hall in Old Poway Park*  
7:30 pm -- \$22 (\$18 members)

**Larry & Joe**

**Larry Bellorín & Joe Troop** were destined to make music together. Larry hails from Monagas, Venezuela and is a legend of Llanera music. Joe is from North Carolina and is a GRAMMY-nominated bluegrass and old-time musician. Larry was forced into exile and is an asylum seeker in North Carolina. Joe,



after a decade in South America, got stranded back in his stomping grounds during the pandemic. Larry works construction to make ends meet. Joe's acclaimed "latingrass" band Che Apalache was forced into hiatus, and he shifted into action working with asylum seeking migrants.

Currently based in the Triangle of North Carolina, both men are versatile multi-instrumentalists and singer-songwriters on a mission to show that music has no borders. As a duo they perform a fusion of Venezuelan and Appalachian folk music on harp, banjo, cuatro, fiddle, and whatever else they decide to throw in the van. The program they offer features a distinct blend of their musical inheritances and traditions, as well as storytelling about the ways that music and social movements coalesce.

**Saturday, August 5**

*Pilgrim United Church of Christ*  
7:30 pm -- \$18 (\$15 members)

**Zzymzzy Quartet**

The guys from the **Zzymzzy Quartet** have simple ambitions: they just want to play it like it was when it was unamplified, melodic, swinging, dreamy, full of sly surprise. From the Prohibition through the Second Big War, the glory days of Louis

Armstrong and Duke Ellington are being recaptured humbly and with humor in San Diego by four musicians who know it don't mean a thing without that swing. They are **Beston Barnett** on guitar and vocals, **Matt Gill** on clarinet, **Paul Hormick** on upright bass, and **Pete Miesner** on guitar and lead vocals.

The Zzymzzy Quartet takes its name from a hypothetical "last word" in the dictionary: thus, their tagline, "The Last Word in Gypsy Swing." The "Gypsy" sound is heard in much of the guitar work, heavily influenced by the



stylings of French Gypsy jazz legend Django Reinhardt, but the group also pays tribute to the Swing Era with classic standards and idiomatic originals. Since the Zzymzzy Quartet came together in



2004, they've played dances, parties, weddings, festivals, art openings, and events throughout Southern California to unanimous enthusiasm. They have carved out a name for themselves as a tasty dance band and a classy addition to any wedding. In 2017, ART HURTS Records released their second CD, *Petite Fleur* which, on top of inspired playing and elegant arrangements, features cameos from a variety of beloved San Diego musicians.

## Friday, August 25

Templars Hall in Old Poway Park  
7:30 pm -- \$18 (\$15 members)

### *Dear Darling*

**Dear Darling** is a Sacramento-based trio made up of **Natalie Hagwood** on cello and vocals, **Casey Lipka** on bass and vocals, and **Hannah Jane Kile** on guitar and vocals. Together, their joyous meld of jazz, folk, classical, and pop delivers a fresh new sound that is being recognized both locally and nationally.

Happenstance and the COVID lockdown brought the three "darlings" together in late 2019. Casey and Hannah immediately bonded after the two met while performing in the thriving Sacramento music scene. Natalie and Casey

joined forces after Casey hired Natalie sight unseen for a gig and realized the duo's undeniable chemistry. At Casey's suggestion, the three women met, and Dear Darling became a reality.

Dear Darling's uplifting vocal harmonies echo Joni Mitchell and the Laurel Canyon sound of the late 1960s. Augmented



with classical instrumentation fused with modern day messaging that encourages empowerment and inner strength, Dear Darling put a distinctively feminine spin on the Americana music form.

The accolades and milestones continued. The year 2022 began on an auspicious note with the release of Dear Darling's first album, *Believe*. Lush harmonies propel the title track that speaks to the importance of faith and self-love. *Always*, another

standout track, serves as a heartfelt lullaby professing a mother's enduring love for her child.

Dear Darling was selected to perform as one of three opening acts for the 14th annual Cayamo Sixth Man Soundcheck Festival, a seven-day Caribbean cruise featuring Americana artists

Emmy Lou Harris, Punch Brothers, the Indigo Girls, and Grace Potter. As the trio sing in their track *Way Deep Down*, "the seed will not grow if you keep it from the ground."

With angelic harmonies as billowy as clouds, and a reputation for live performances that continues to bloom, Dear Darling is firmly planted to move from critical "darlings" to mainstream audiences. And that's no small feat for a trio whose jazz-folk vision is unique to the contemporary music scene.

**Friday, September 15**

*Templars Hall in Old Poway Park*  
7:30 pm -- \$18 (\$15 members)

**Mari Black**

Mari has played for us several times, and she has always wowed the crowd.

Called “one of the brightest fiddlers around today” (Brian O'Donovan, WGBH radio's *A Celtic Sojourn*), multi-style violinist and champion

fiddler **Mari Black** delights audiences around the world with her energetic playing, sparkling stage presence, and dazzlingly virtuosic fiddling. Mari's dynamic performances are infused with

her sense playfulness and deep love of the history behind the music, as she weaves together driving dance tunes with beloved stories that bring the music to life. Walk into any of her shows, and you're pretty much guaranteed to see people out of their seats and dancing in the aisles!

Mari's passion for dance-driven music extends far beyond the concert stage, as reflected in her work as a



teacher, composer, dancer, competition judge, and musical ambassador committed to connecting people through music. Having earned her Doctorate in Education from Columbia University, Mari is a master teacher who is dedicated to helping students of all ages and levels explore the joy of making music.

Currently touring nationally with her trio, Mari's favorite thing to do is sweep audiences away on a spirited musical adventure featuring dance music from around the globe:

Celtic, American, and Canadian fiddling, jazz, tango, klezmer, folk, original works, and more!

**Saturday, September 30**

*Pilgrim United Church of Christ*  
7:30 pm -- \$18 (\$15 members)

**Gadan**

**Gadan** is a new project created by four experienced and well-known musicians in the Irish trad and European folk/rock scene. They come with years of experience touring the major European and United States traditional and alternative folk music festivals.

Their high-energy repertoire has a powerful live appeal and a sound comparable to new-trad acts such as Talisk, East Pointers, and WeBanjo3, but with a unique identity thanks to years of experience in several folk scenes, from Appalachian and old time to Scottish and Italian folk and traditional music.

Their lineup consists of two banjos (tenor and clawhammer), fiddle, mandolin, bouzouki, and guitar, creating an “strings-only” sound with a hint of electronics, driven by a



powerful rhythmic pulse. Gadan's performances build energy, taking audience to ecstasy with their wide spectrum of refreshing yet traditional sound.

Gadan consists of **Joan Gatti** on fiddle, **Lorenzo Testa** on tenor banjo and vocals, **Jacopo Ventura** on guitar and vocals, and **Andrea Verga** on five-string banjo, mandolin, and vocals.

The band ended its first United States tour in October 2022, playing in festivals and folk venues all along the East Coast, from Maine down to North Carolina, then New York and Boston. They are now back to cover the West. Gadan's power leaves no one unmoved. You don't need drums to groove.

music has always had a special tint of her Scandinavian heritage, making her a favorite among music lovers, but her

experience the United States in a way few people do. The people she met opened their homes and hearts to her and some of them even made it

into her songs. But the album is not a diary from her tour. It is more of a storybook of emotions, new and old, in which everyone can find their own place.

Sofia's debut album, *Blue Moon*, was released in 2005 to much critical acclaim. *Street of Dreams*, followed in 2007, and it features a duet with indie pop icon Bernard Butler from British band Suede, released on her



## Friday, October 6

Templars Hall in Old Poway Park  
7:30 pm -- \$18 (\$15 members)

### *Sofia Talvik*

Unmistakably Nordic in flavor, **Sofia Talvik** somehow still conforms to American interpretations of her own original music, a North Sea siren blending sparkle and melancholy. She is a veteran performer with seven full-length albums as well as numerous EPs, singles, and tours behind her.

Growing up in Sweden, her

extended United States touring has moved her music closer to the Americana tradition. Adventures on the road stirred up a lot of emotions, both those of triumph and joy, but also those of self-doubt and defeat, all of which found their way into the songs of her 2015 album, *Big Sky Country*.

Living like a musical nomad, moving from place to place, slowly but steadily building her audience through her heartfelt and personal performances, she got to

then newly-formed record label Makaki Music. Continuing a steady pace of recording, Sofia released her album, *Jonestown*, named after the tragic 1978 event in Jonestown, Guyana, in 2008, and was the first Swedish female artist to play the Lollapalooza festival in Chicago, that same year.

Sofia has toured several times since her first success at the Lollapalooza festival and has been invited to officially showcase at SXSW as well as at The Folk



Alliance International Conference.

“Folk is as short as it is blissful. It gracefully bows to tradition. Sofia Talvik captivates the listeners with the soul and emotions of these folk songs. The Swede is one of those singer-songwriters who turns everything she touches into gold.”

– Lie In The Sound

April 2015, Sofia’s sixth studio album, *Big Sky Country*, was released. A storybook of adventures and hardships, about sometimes doubting yourself but also finding strength within yourself. Ten original songs written on the road as well as in the contemplation after, beautifully packaged in a simple yet powerful production. *Big Sky Country* also contains a cover of *Starwalker* by Buffy Sainte-Marie. The album was appointed fourth best Americana album of the year by the United Kingdom newspaper *The Telegraph*.

The latest album, *Paws of a Bear*, released in 2019, gained a lot of critical acclaim in both the United States and Europe, charting on the top lists of the United States Folk Radio, Roots Music Report, and Euro Americana Charts. The first single, *Take Me Home*, stayed in the top ten of the United States Folk Radio charts for several months. Many of the songs of the album are on the theme of home and identity.



# Folk NOTES

July 2023

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Folk Notes is published four times yearly by San Diego Folk Heritage, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the folk arts in Southern California.

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SAN DIEGO  
FOLK  
HERITAGE



## Where we Play:

### **Templars Hall in Old Poway Park**

14134 Midland Road, Poway 92064

### **Pilgrim United Church of Christ**

2020 Chestnut Avenue, Carlsbad 92008

## Where we Dance:

### **Dorothea Laub Dance Place in Liberty Station**

2650 Truxtun Road, San Diego 92106

### **From the Chairfolk**

In addition to my work with San Diego Folk Heritage, I am also involved with the San Diego Scottish Highland Games. Their annual event will take place this year on June 24 and 25 at Brengle Terrace Park in Vista and will feature live music on two stages. Long-time SDFH audiences will probably recognize three of the four groups from our concerts.

The main stage will present **Men of Worth** and the **Browne Sisters**. The bands on the other stage will be **Highland Way** and **Wicked Tinkers**. There will also be folks from the Storytellers of San Diego in the grove near the playground.

In addition, there will be traditional heavy athletics, pipe and drum competitions, highland dancing, sheep dog trials, and lots more. Go to [SDHighlandGames.org](http://SDHighlandGames.org) to find out the details.

**Dick Jay**

## San Diego Contra Dance

Contra dancing is a form of North American folk dance. Dancers start in sets of two parallel lines that run the length of the hall and do a sequence of moves with couples progressing up or down the set. Many of the basic figures are similar to figures in square dancing.

Contra dancing is easy for beginners to learn, and the half-hour beginners' session before our dances will teach you most of what you need to dance the entire evening.

We dance to live music and recommend comfortable clothing and soft-soled shoes. As a modern dance form, there are no limits on who can dance as partners. You need not bring a partner with you.

Our current schedule, pandemics willing, is to dance on the first Saturday of each month from 7:30 to 10pm with a beginners' session at 7. Our dances are at the Dorothea Laub Dance Place in Liberty Station at 2650 Truxtun Road in a second floor studio. We ask that you pay whatever feels like the right amount from \$10 to \$25.

Visit our website [\*\*sandiegocontra.org\*\*](http://sandiegocontra.org) to see our schedule, COVID protocols, and shoe guidelines.