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# BLUEGRASS 1993

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A RAINY NIGHT IN THE ROMA BAR, 1971, WHERE THE PROGENITORS OF THE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL CONGREGATED. (BACK ROW, FROM LEFT) MARY KAY SHELLMAN, SALLI RUSSELL, PEGGY BEDFORD. (FRONT ROW, FROM LEFT) JOHN HERNDON, JIM BURLEIGH, PETER FLAG, FRED SHELLMAN, KOOSTER MCALLISTER AND J.B. MATTEOTI.

# 20TH ANNIVERSARY TELLURIDE Bluegrass

*How many bluegrass musicians does it take to screw in a light bulb? Five, one to screw it in and four to complain because it's electric.*

— From the book *Mountaintop, Music and Magic*.

*If it doesn't have strings, we don't want to hear it.*

— Sign seen at Bob and Fred's Tarp-o-Rama, Telluride Town Campground during the 19th Telluride Bluegrass Festival.

Bluegrass and acoustic music have had a home in Telluride for 20 years. From very humble origins, the Telluride Bluegrass Festival has persevered, to establish itself as the premiere acoustic music festival in the country.

The forefathers of the event were a bunch of rag-tag musicians who had a penchant for picking and called themselves the Fall Creek Band.

The outfit consisted of Kooster McAllister on banjo, J.B. Matteoti on bass, John "Picker" Herndon on mandolin

and Fred Shellman on guitar. Bruce Lutz played fiddle with the band for a short time. In 1973, the band invited two other regional bands, the Black Canyon Band and the Denver Bluegrass Band, to come to Telluride for the Fourth of July weekend. A few hundred people got together for what the *Telluride Times* called "the finest examples of bluegrass and country music."

That fall, the Fall Creek Band attended the national flatpicking championships in Winfield, Kan., where it first encountered the New Grass Revival, a young innovative band that was playing contemporary music with traditional instruments.

Fall Creek decided that Telluride was as good a gathering place as Winfield, and wouldn't it be great if ...

The rest, as they say, is history, and this year the festival enters its third decade. It certainly hasn't been a smooth ride. In the early years, the festival lost money continually due to the extraordinary cost of sound equipment and produc-

tion expenses. In 1979, rumors circulated throughout Colorado that the event had been cancelled. Only a few people showed up for the festival, almost causing the promoters to close up shop.

But the music never stopped, and the high lonesome sounds of bluegrass still ring throughout the San Miguel Valley every June.

For this 20th Telluride Bluegrass Festival, the *Times-Journal* spoke to a core group of people who have strong ties to the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. Their recollections offer insights into why Telluride is the preferred meeting place to so many musicians, and about the history of this seminal gathering.

### J.B. MATTEOTI

*J.B. Matteoti played bass for the Fall Creek Band from its inception in 1972 until it broke up in 1974. Matteoti then concentrated his efforts on running his clothing store, The Whispering Eagle Trading Company, located at what's now the Telluride Art Gallery. Matteoti stayed on as a member of High Country Concerts, the group that promoted the festival, into the 1980s. Matteoti moved to New Jersey in 1986, where he still lives. He is an engineer for CP Communications which supplies the entertainment industry in New York with walkie talkies, wireless microphones and other communications devices.*

"I first came to Telluride in 1970 before there was a ski area. When I came into town, main street was still dirt. The



At last year's festival, Emmylou Harris introduced Sam Bush to the crowd as "the King of Telluride."

During their closing night set together, John Cowan quipped, "If Sam is the King of Telluride, I must be the court jester."

For the second consecutive year, Telluride audiences will be treated to a set of music by the king and the court jester. This year the act that pairs the former New Grass Revival partners even has a name — Sammonjon.

## SAM BUSH & JOHN COWAN

by David Owen

*The King and Court Jester  
Saturday, 9pm to close*

Bush and Cowan are backed by Bush's fellow Nash Ramblers — Larry Atamanouick on drums and John Randall Stewart on guitar and vocals.

As much as anybody, Bush and Cowan are the embodiments of the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. Cowan has missed

only two years and Bush has appeared in every festival except for the first one. (That inaugural event featured only three Colorado bands.)

Like Strength in Numbers, not everyone in the country has had the good fortune to see Bush's sweet mandolin chops paired with the distinctive voice of Johnny C.

Last year, Sammonjon played five gigs together. This year, the Telluride Bluegrass slot is the only date planned.

"We realize that most of the times we play the Sam and John show, it happens in Colorado," Bush said. "So we've thrown in quite a few new tunes this year to keep it fresh for everybody."

Since New Grass Revival broke up at the end of 1990, Bush has been busy with the Nash Ramblers. Bush has also worked extensively in the last two years as a session player in Nashville, joining forces with Leon Russell, Alabama and Peter Rowan, to name a few.

In his post-New Grass days, Cowan has had his hands full. He recently finished cutting an album with Rusty Young from Poco, Pat Simmons from the Doobie Brothers and Nashville musician Bill Lord. Cowan describes the album as a country-rock project. Cowan has also been collaborating with legendary session player Al Kooper on a contemporary rhythm and blues album for Warner Brothers.

Yet despite their busy schedules, Bush and Cowan made time to prepare for their annual Telluride performance. The two



began rehearsing together in March. In April, they brought Stewart in on the sessions, and by the end of the month Atamanouick began participating. The entire band then had several rehearsals at Bush's house. A couple weeks ago, the band rented a rehearsal hall and spent a few long days refining their sound.

"We're much more prepared this year than we've been in the past," Cowan said.

One of the five Sammonjon performances of 1992 occurred in December when Bush and Cowan came to Telluride along with Atamanouick, Stewart, Jerry Douglas and Peter Rowan for the First Annual Winter Grass shows.

"That was really special," Bush said of his winter visit to Telluride. "It was nice to play specifically for the people of

Telluride since the ties with the Revival go back so far with the people here. The merchants used to close up shop during the Revival's set, or so they told us.

"And just getting to be in Telluride in the winter was a real treat."

In honor of his flawless attendance record, Bush's mandolin is featured on this year's commemorative 20th anniversary poster, which was painted by renowned Colorado artist and famed Telluride poster creator Willie Matthews.

"I'm flattered not only to have my mandolin on the 20th anniversary poster, but to have a painting of my instrument done by Willie Matthews," Bush said. "Not many musicians get to have their instrument painted by an artist as great as Willie."

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Bela Fleck admits to having grown up at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. Indeed, Telluride has been privy to several stops along Fleck's ever-changing musical journey.

Fleck first appeared in Telluride in 1981 as the banjo player for the New Grass Revival. In his early years in the festival, Fleck performed solo sets in addition to his work with New Grass. In 1987, Fleck began playing with the Telluride All-Stars, who later became Strength in Numbers. In 1990, Fleck

# BELA FLECK

Saturday, 5:45 to 7pm

introduced Telluride to the Flecktones, his most innovative band to date.

Joining Fleck in the Flecktones were the Wooten brothers — Victor and Roy (Future Man) on bass and Synth-Axe drummer (an electronic percussion instrument with a guitar body and synth drum pads) respectively — and piano player/harp wizard Howard Levy.

At the end of '92, Levy left the band. This year Telluriders will see the new three-person version of the Flecktones. "Howard's decision to leave the band was

based on a decision to spend more time with his family and to be able to do his own thing," Fleck said. "The three of us really understood and felt it was right for him to leave. He just wasn't happy."

In January, the Flecktones retreated into the studio and began working on ways to fill out their sound. Fleck began experimenting with a midi banjo, which allows him to play keyboards underneath his banjo licks. Victor has a new bass that has a higher range than traditional basses. Wooten has been working on playing different basses simultaneously. Future Man has stepped up to a new level, taking advantage of developments in technology.

"In some ways the sound is bigger than it ever has been," Fleck said. "And the three of us are also working harder than we ever have. But there's also a very relaxed feeling, that everybody wants to be here, and that we're being forced to change the music and grow."

Fleck said the Flecktones have been conscious about not letting the technology become the main force that drives the music.

"The music is still very rooted. The main difference is that you're not hearing harmonica solos," Fleck said. "We still have the same kind of keyboards as we had before. We've always used the keyboards as pads and fills underneath the acoustic banjo and underneath the bass and the rhythm section. I was thinking when we started, 'Boy, I don't know how happy I am about putting a lot of effort into technology because that's not what I



love about music.' But the fact is it's not the technology, it's what you do with it. And we've found a way to make it feel like the Flecktones. I think there's a lot of roots-oriented influences in our music, from the folk and bluegrass traditions. And it will often come out along with a real urban, funk feel."

During their rehearsals in January, the Flecktones worked up close to 40 new songs. After essentially reinventing the band, the Flecktones toured in February. After touring, the always prolific Flecktones (they have recorded an album a year) went into the studio to record. Joining the Flecktones on the new effort were Branford Marsalis and Bruce

Hornsby among other special guests.

"We recorded 17 songs and had a problem because we had 85 minutes of music, and we had to cut it down; it was tough deciding what to cut," Fleck said.

Fleck has not come up with a name for the new album, and it won't be easy topping "Flight of the Cosmic Hippo" or "Ufo Tofu" (their second and third albums respectively).

Fleck has continually proved to both the world and to Telluride that he is the Captain Kirk of music — the banjo player who goes where no musician has gone before. And with a new more compact version of the Flecktones, have faith that Bela will deliver.

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# THE MAKING OF A FESTIVAL

by Geoff Hanson

## Craig Ferguson and Telluride's bluegrass family

Descendants of Nebraska banker Harold Baugh Olsen fill varied positions of every rank in the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, from owner, administrator and production manager to performer.

**Ferguson set out to revive the Bluegrass Festival following poor turnouts in '85 and '86. He and eight other investors bought the festival in '86.**

Members of the Olsen clan are, nevertheless, unlikely bluegrass enthusiasts.

Bluegrass Festival owner and administrator Craig Ferguson, Olsen's grandson,

describes a lineage steeped in finance. "H.B. Olsen's two daughters married bankers and his two sons became bankers," Ferguson explains.

Craig Ferguson and two cousins, William and John Eaton, broke the financier mold set by their parents to join the ranks of Telluride's Bluegrass Festival.

Ferguson set out to revive the Bluegrass Festival following poor turnouts in '85 and '86. He and eight other investors bought the festival in '86.

Since then, Ferguson has adopted the historic legacy of Bluegrass as his own.

"When Bluegrass music began in the '30s it was bold and adventurous," Ferguson explains. "We focus less on the music than on the spirit that gave birth to it." As a result of this spirit, performances from such pillars of the bluegrass establishment such as Bill Monroe, Del McCoury and John Hartford share the bill with bold departures from tradition such

as the performance of the Drepung Monks.

Ferguson's cousin, John Eaton, the festival's new production manager, shared responsibilities with Carlisle Connick last year. This year, he will hire and manage over 30 supervisors and 100 volunteers by himself.

Ferguson says Eaton was a natural choice for production manager. "We had been involved in business before," Ferguson says. "And I was christened in his house on the day he was born." In 1985, the two opened H.B. Woodsongs, a music store in Boulder named in honor of their grandfather.

John's brother William Eaton contributes to the festival as a musician. A ukulele received as a childhood gift from his Uncle Charlie Ferguson sparked a consuming interest in acoustic music. He now builds guitars, harp guitars, and lyres in Phoenix, Ariz., and has performed "native music" at the festival on three occasions.

Craig Ferguson says the family was suspicious of his involvement in the Telluride Bluegrass Festival at first. "They all thought we were crazy," he says. However, after visiting Telluride, Craig's father, Charlie Ferguson, was won over by the festival — and the town. Last year, he opened the First National Bank of Telluride. Bringing the circle to completion, Craig Ferguson now sits on the bank's board of directors.

# STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

by Geoff Hanson

**All-stars are back Friday, 8:30 to 10pm**

After a two-year hiatus, Strength in Numbers returns to Telluride to help celebrate the festival's 20th anniversary. The band is composed of Bela Fleck on banjo, Edgar Meyer on bass, Sam Bush on mandolin, Jerry Douglas on dobro and Mark O'Connor on fiddle. Each musician in this acoustic supergroup has expanded the range of his instruments and left a substantial mark on contemporary music.

Since as early as 1978, the members of Strength in Numbers have played on each other's solo albums and occasionally jammed together at different festivals.

It was in Telluride that Strength in Numbers became an official entity, and the band is a testimony to the possibilities and spontaneity of the Bluegrass Festival. Indeed, few people outside of Telluride have ever been lucky enough to see Strength in Numbers perform.

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► Though the act solidified its bond in Telluride, the band began to take form in Nashville. It was Edgar Meyer, then a 24-year-old bass player, who actually set the wheels in motion that led to the creation of *Strength in Numbers*.

"When Edgar moved to Nashville, he had four players he really liked to listen to — Jerry, Bela, Sam and me," Marc O'Connor said in an interview from Nashville. "He had it in his mind that he was coming to Nashville to get a recording contract and to be able to record with people like us, or actually with us. I got a call in 1986 for a session with this guy named Edgar Meyer. We showed up and he had some original material and I think that specific conglomeration appeared on two songs."

That summer, Meyer was booked for a set at the Nashville Summer Lights Festival. His slot was billed as Edgar Meyer and Friends. Meyer invited Bush, Douglas, O'Connor and Fleck to perform with him, hoping that one of them might take him up on his invitation.

"The idea was that Edgar was just going to go with the flow and play with whoever showed up," O'Connor recalls. "And we all happened to show up. We played the two tunes we recorded with him. And then we just kept playing. It got all of this attention and we all felt really good about it — something very impromptu turned into something even more significant."

The next year, Fleck and Bush were scheduled to play in Telluride with New



Grass Revival, and Douglas and O'Connor were slated to perform with Peter Rowan. Fred Shellman, the festival promoter at the time, used to leave a spot on the line-up open for a jam session. Fleck told Shellman about Meyer, and their get-together at the Summer Lights Festival. Shellman flew Meyer out for the 1987 festival and the Telluride All-Stars were born. An instant success, the act was booked again for the next year.

"After calling ourselves the Telluride All-Stars for one or maybe two years, we realized that we were only five musicians out of all the great ones that were playing in the festival," Sam Bush said. "And it seemed a bit presumptuous to call

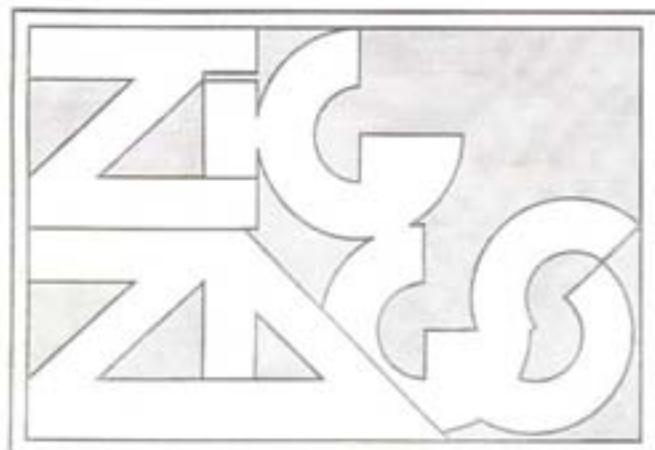
ourselves the only all-stars at the whole festival. We had an offer to make a record from MCA and we wanted to call the band Telluride and we planned on calling the album *Strength in Numbers*. But there was already a band in Alabama calling themselves Telluride, so we decided to switch everything around and call the band *Strength in Numbers*, and the album *The Telluride Sessions*."

The band began writing material for that album in Telluride in 1988. To ensure that the album was balanced, each member co-wrote one piece — along with the rest of the band members. "Usually in a band, there is one strong visionary," Meyer said. "With this group, there are

five visionaries coming together."

The band rehearsed together for five days at the beginning of 1989, and recorded the album in one week. The result is one of the most mellifluous and tympanic tickling collaborations of all time. The music covers a wide array of musical genres, and while it is rooted in classical concepts of arrangement and theme development, there are plenty of hot licks throughout. The album was recorded with no doubling parts, so that the music could be performed live.

On Friday night, Telluride audiences will be treated to one of the rare live *Strength in Numbers* performances.



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FALL CREEK BAND IN 1973 AT TOWN PARK. (LEFT TO RIGHT) FRED SHELLMAN, JOHN HERNDON, KOOSTER MCALLISTER AND J.B. MATTEOTTI. (PHOTO COURTESY OF JON HELLER)

## 20TH ANNIVERSARY TELLURIDE Bluegrass

### JOHN COWAN

back and say, 'Hey, I did that, I started that. That's a good feeling, it really is.'

*John Cowan had just joined New Grass Revival as the band's bass player when they played their first Telluride gig in 1974. The once roly-poly vocalist is known to those in the festival simply as Johnny C.*

continued from page 2

sidewalks were wood and they still had hitching posts up. The sheriff at the time, Everett Morrow, took a look at us and said, 'You boys take a look around and be on your way, this is not going to be another Aspen.' So we left and went to Aspen and returned when the ski area opened in 1972.

"We got the idea to put on a festival by going to Winfield, Kan., for the National Flatpicker Championships. We met New Grass Revival there. We camped out and did a lot of parking-lot picking and had a lot of fun. We decided that we should give a festival try in Telluride. The first year, we held the event on the Fourth of July in Elks Park. It cost something like \$2 to get in. We invited New Grass for the second year, and they said yes, and we thought that was the coolest thing.

"We always went up to Dunton after the festival to unwind. That was one of the highlights for us as promoters — to get together in a quiet location, play music, do some talking and just hang out. During the festival, there's not a lot of time for that.

"I was responsible for security at the front gate. By the fifth year, it was getting large enough to where we needed booze-back security. There was always a lot of planning, and I was in charge of overseeing a lot of people. Our staff all wore shirts that said "Official" on them. Fred, Kooster and I wore shirts that said "More Official" on them.

"I'm very proud of the Bluegrass Festival. I think in my life it's one of the best things that I have accomplished. Seeing what's become of it, I can look

beauty of the town itself and the location. It's not about the the audience or the music. It's just a chilling moment for me.

"I've brought so many people out there over the years, and I've given up trying to describe Telluride. There's not enough adjectives that I know of. So I give up and I just say 'come on,' and they're left to their own demises."

### RUSS AUSTIN

*Russ Austin was the original guitar player for the Black Canyon Band, who played at the first annual Telluride Bluegrass Festival with the Fall Creek Band and the Denver Bluegrass Band. Austin promoted the Black Canyon Music Festival in Olathe for 10 years. He now serves as the station manager at KURA in Ridgway. The Black Canyon Band opens the festival Thursday.*

"The year of the first Bluegrass Festival, we were making an album, and we ran into Fred Shellman and the Fall Creek Boys who invited us to play a gig in Telluride. That first year, we played out by an old house by the tennis courts in Town Park because that was the only place we could get power. The second year they moved it over to the area in Town Park where it is now.

"It was in the second year that I first met Sam Bush and New Grass Revival. They had a brand new record out. Ebo Walker played bass, but he had just left the band and been replaced by John Cowan. Courtney Johnson was their banjo player and Curtis Birch played guitar. It was always a treat to see New Grass.

"Whenever the Fall Creek Band played in Montrose, they would stay with us. So we were friends in that way. But there was also a rivalry. We were running the same circuits at the same time, so we were pretty competitive.

"Fred and I had a rivalry outside of the band because we were both putting on festivals at the same time as well. It wasn't mean spirited or anything. We were all buddies. It was like a bunch of old cowboys sitting around a campfire spitting tobacco on each other's boots.

"When the Bluegrass Festival started, I wondered if it was going to last. The ski area wasn't really going that well at the time. Telluride was a little dusty hole. There were only three shops open in town. To see it grow, and develop into a premier heavy hitter festival was unexpected. It's exciting to be a part of it, and to be remembered as being a part of it.

### SAM BUSH

*Sam Bush is the embodiment of the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. He has played at more festivals than any other performer. Indeed, the event was created as a way to bring him and his band to Telluride. As a tribute to Bush, this year's 20th anniversary poster features his mandolin.*

"I'll never forget our introduction to Telluride. We arrived in town in the middle of the night. We were looking for the hotel, and we had a lot of trouble finding it because it was 3 a.m. When we

finally found it, the front door was open and our keys were lying on the table with a note that said, 'New Grass — welcome to Telluride.'

"At 10 a.m. a knock came at the door, and a man introduced himself as Kooster. He immediately asked us if we could use part of our P.A. They forgot to bury their snake, the chord that connects all the microphones to the out front sound board, never realizing that people would dance on it and break it in half. So they borrowed our P.A. and our snake — not only did we get to play the festival, we got to supply half of the P.A.

"To me, the Bluegrass Festival has turned into more of a national holiday — it's what a Fourth of July celebration ought to be. I make my living playing music, but this particular weekend is really special to me in that our band, New Grass Revival, and the Telluride festival kind of grew up together so to speak. We've always had such fun in Telluride, we never felt it was work.

"By now, we've been so many times and we've made so many friends just amongst people from Telluride that it's always nice just to see them. We meet up with musicians in Telluride that we haven't seen in awhile, and they all bring their families. It's a great meeting place for all of us now, and I'm glad we've always gotten to be there. It's a hard place to beat."

### BELA FLECK

*This year, Bela Fleck celebrates his 12th year of playing at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. The banjo virtuoso has performed with New Grass Revival — as a solo performer, with his band the Flecktones and with Strength in Numbers.*

"I have very special feelings about the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. I almost feel like I grew up at the festival. When I joined New Grass Revival and got to come to Telluride, it was just a peak life experience. I had always heard about the festival and wondered about it. It was a central event of New Grass Revival's year, and the guys always talked about it, and I was trying to figure out what was this very special thing.

"And when I got there, it became very clear that it was a combination of these special people — these lifelong friends that the band had made over years of playing there — with this very special place. It was a gift to me because by joining the band I became a part of this family.

"Telluride was a place where I got to do things outside of the band. There was always jamming. The more I was there, the more I would play. The more I knew people, the more people would invite me to sit in with them. So I always looked forward to the festival. At one point, I remember playing five sets with different people in one day. I got to do my own solo sets. Fred was always telling me to try things. It's always been a place of great experimentation for me, and I always pick up a bunch of new ideas from other musicians at Telluride."



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## DAN FOLGELBERG

*Reunited, again*  
Sunday, 8:30 to 10pm

In 1983, Dan Fogelberg released an album titled *High Country Snows* and the music and feel of the Telluride Bluegrass Festival was captured on wax.

The album, according to Fogelberg, was the culmination of his desire to record a "traditional style of music," and was the result of Fogelberg's being reunited with old friends and bluegrass music during the '83 Telluride Bluegrass Festival.

Fogelberg will wrap up the Festival this year with the help of Douglas, Bush, Fleck and just about anyone else who is willing to join the jam sessions.

During that festival, Fogelberg and musicians for whom he "holds a great regard," such as bluegrass legends Sam



Bush and Bela Fleck, put Fogelberg back in touch with the music that he holds dear.

Now, 10 years later, Fogelberg is back and many of those old friends are here and ready to play. Ready to spark from the union of Fogelberg's guitar, Douglas' dobro and Fleck's sizzling banjo.

Fogelberg will wrap up the Festival this year with the help of Douglas, Bush, Fleck and just about anybody else, who is willing to join the jam session.

For the festival, this marks the 20-year reunion, for Fogelberg it is a 10-year reunion. He is here to focus his talents on bluegrass, the Telluride audience and something very special to him — his high-country friends.

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# JOHN HARTFORD

Riverboat fiddler  
Sunday, 12 to 1:15pm

Telluride and John Hartford have much in common.

Hartford, who plays three instruments, is the author of a children's book, and a dancer, singer and riverboat pilot, and he has a way of captivating people, much like the Telluride valley does.

Though Hartford lives with the reputation of being a shy, almost aloof performer, the manner in which he shares his two passions of river life and music with an audience — by tap clogging, dancing through the aisles and with lyrics that require astute listening — has brought him to stardom.

Hartford's "Gentle on My Mind," which he wrote in 1966 and Glen Campbell made into an enormous hit, remains one of the most popular songs of the last 25 years. Hartford has won three Grammy awards, one for his memorable album, *Mark Twain*.

Hartford has been a regular at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival and his last visit was two years ago, when James Taylor was the Sunday headliner.

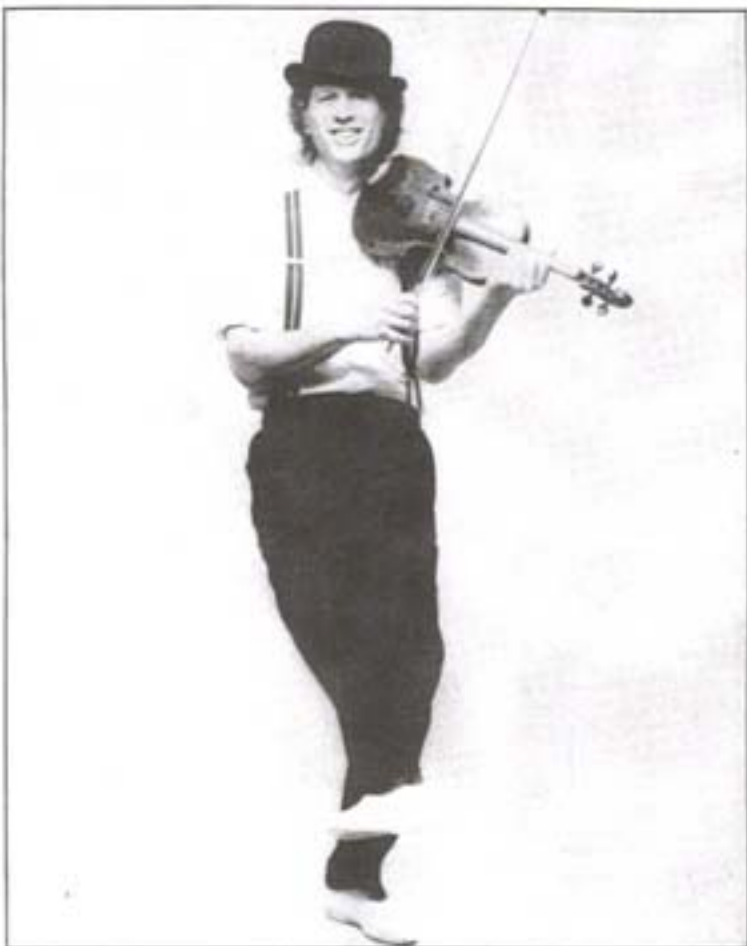
"We all played a lot together," Hartford said of his early visits to Telluride. "I remember playing with Sam Bush, Courtney Johnson and Peter Wernik. We used to do a lot of jamming. I can remember some wonderful jam sessions and actually some of them were up in a cabin in Dumton. But I still consider Dumton as a part of Telluride."

But the success has not detracted the fiddler, etc. from what is important to him in life — the river.

Since his life and lyrics revolve around riverboats, old washing machines, gamblers and railroads, Hartford decided that his success would not hinder him, but rather allow him to lead the life he wanted.

So with a list of musical credits a mile long, Hartford earned a riverboat pilot's license and became a frequent crew member aboard the Mississippi river steamboat *Julia Belle Swain*. He is the curator of a riverboat memorabilia collection.

But Hartford also continues to perform and record. He has two new albums out on his own *Small Dog a Barkin'* label, which is based in Nashville. The first, an instrumental album filled with all originals, is titled *Cadillac Rag*, and the second, a "traditional Hartford album," as he described it, is called *Goin' Back to Dixie*, which includes a cover of Eric Clapton's "You Are Wonderful Tonight."



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# JOHN HIATT

by Geoff Hanson

Finally, the genuine article — Friday, 10:30pm to 12am



Each year at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, you can count on hearing several John Hiatt songs performed by various artists over the course of the weekend. This year, the genuine article will be in Telluride.

Hiatt is one of the great songwriters of our time. His songs have been covered by

artists such as the Neville Brothers ("Washable Ink"), Three Dog Night ("Sure as I'm Sitting Here"), Bonnie Raitt ("Thing Called Love"), and Charlie Sexton ("Tennessee Plates"), to name a few.

"It's something I've done since I was 11 years old," Hiatt said of the songwriting process, in an interview conducted from his Nashville home. "It's as natural as falling off a log, having a bowel movement or brushing my teeth. It's just something that I do. It's a very satisfying thing. I'm sure it has all kinds of negative things. I'm sure I've done it habitually; I'm sure I've done it to prove I'm something. I'm sure I've done it for wrong reasons and right reasons, it doesn't even matter anymore, I just do it."

What are Hiatt's favorite versions of his songs performed by other people?

"I like Willie Nelson's version of 'Most Unoriginal Sin,'" Hiatt said. "Iggy Pop did a version of a song I wrote called 'Something Wild' (which will appear on Hiatt's new album) that I really like. I'm a fan of the Neville Brothers and I was honored when they cut my tune 'Washable Ink.'

Aaron Neville did a real nice song from *Slow Turning* called 'Feels Like Rain.' Buddy Guy recently recorded 'Feels Like Rain' as well, and I was really tickled that he recorded that. A lot of people call me and ask me if I've got any new songs. Bob Dylan even called me once, and he recorded a song of mine for a movie he was scoring. I've found that if you put the phone in, they will call."

A few years ago, Hiatt participated in the Bottom Line's "In Their Own Words" songwriting seminar along with Lyle Lovett, Joe Ely and Guy Clark.

"We played about a dozen shows in which we'd sit on stage, talk about songwriting, and perform," Hiatt said. "I signed on because I wanted people to meet the songwriter in the flesh and hear them talk about their material, so people would realize there was a human behind the songs."

Telluride is one of only five dates that Hiatt is playing this summer, though more dates are planned for the fall, when Hiatt will tour in support of his new album, which is slated for release Sept. 7.

For the album, which Hiatt completed over a month ago, the singer/songwriter assembled a new band that he says is made up of "a bunch of knuckleheads" including Mike Ward on guitar, Corky James on guitar, Dave Faragher on bass and Michael Urbano on drums.

The new album will be Hiatt's 12th recording. He cut his first album for Epic called *Hanging Around the Observatory* in 1974. Over the next 13 years, Hiatt

recorded seven albums for Epic and Geffen Records. While these albums never registered huge sales, they firmly established him as a premiere songwriter. Hiatt signed on with A&M in 1987, and his album, *Bring the Family*, received substantial airplay. But it was his 1988 album, *Slow Turning*, that pushed Hiatt to the forefront of popular music. His 1990 follow-up, *Stolen Moments*, was equally well-received.

In 1991, Hiatt teamed up with Ry Cooder, Jim Keltner and Nick Lowe to form a group called Little Village.

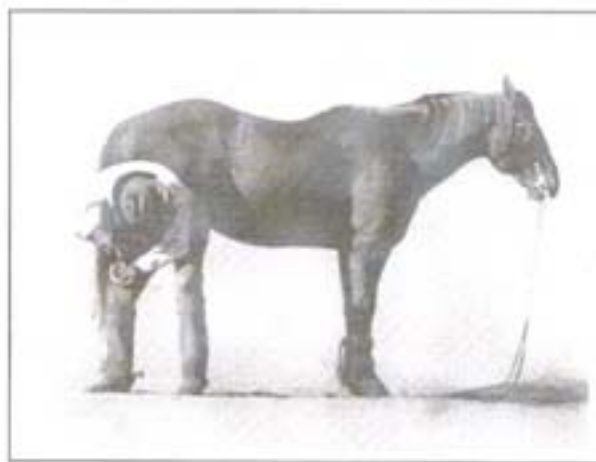
"[My recording career] is a bloody miracle," Hiatt said. "I can't believe I've been able to make all of these records. Three or four record companies have been more than willing enough to give me enough rope to hang myself, and you can't ask for more than that."

For years, a staple in John Hiatt's live shows has been the unveiling of a giant velvet Elvis portrait during his song "Riding with the King" from the 1983 album of the same name. Hiatt says Elvis will not be making the trip to Telluride.

"I don't think Elvis could take the altitude," he said. "He's resting for the summer. He goes down to a lake in southwest Tennessee and eats fried catfish, hush puppies and french fries. He also enjoys water-skiing."

And while Elvis won't be coming to Telluride (though you never do know), we're certainly delighted to finally be welcoming John Hiatt to the Telluride Bluegrass Festival.

## WILLIAM MATTHEWS



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# TELLURIDE TRIO

by Geoff Hanson

## *A Douglas, Meyer and Barenberg treat*

Telluride Bluegrass audiences Saturday will be treated to a set of instrumental music from three virtuosos: Jerry Douglas, Edgar Meyer and Russ Barenberg.

Douglas is one of the world's premiere dobro players. His two primary influences growing up in Ohio were his father's bluegrass band and contemporary groups like the Beatles and the Byrds.

"I used to play just bluegrass," Douglas says. "And there are things about bluegrass I'll always keep — a kind of raucous rhythm and an element of surprise — but my move to Nashville reopened my mind to all kinds of music."

In Nashville, Douglas is the dobro player on call. He has lent his instrumental wizardry to Ricky Scaggs, Reba MacIntire, Randy Travis, Rosanne Cash and countless others. Douglas is a popular producer, and he has recorded six solo albums. In 1983, he received a Grammy for Best Country Instrumental Perfor-

mance. And Telluriders will know Douglas as the dobro player in Strength in Numbers.

Edgar Meyer joins Douglas in Strength in Numbers as the band's bass player. Indeed, it was Meyer who first got the band together, hiring the rest of the members to play on one of his solo albums. Meyer is one of the top instrumentalists of his time. He is also an innovative and often-performed composer.

In 1985, Meyer became the first regular bass player for the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. To date, he has written six pieces for the festival.

Meyer's compositions and collaborations exhibit a wide range of styles. He has played with the Gueneri Quartet, James Taylor, Kathy Mattea, Mary-Chapin Carpenter, Hank Williams, Jr., the Indigo Girls and the Chieftains.

Russ Barenberg rounds out the trio on acoustic guitar. Barenberg released his first recording with bluegrass trailblazers Country Cooking in 1971. In the 20 years since, he has distinguished himself through his fluid rhythm, rich tones, exceptional range and an uncanny feel for melody and expression.

Barenberg joined forces from 1977 to 1979 with Tony Trischka (who gave Bela Fleck banjo lessons), Matt Glaser and John Miller in the heralded group Heartland.

Barenberg is also a much-requested sideman, having played on over 50 albums. He has composed over half a dozen soundtracks and written three highly acclaimed guitar instruction books.

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# RICHARD THOMPSON

by David Owen

*Music that heals — Sunday, 3:15 to 4:30pm*

Music captured Richard Thompson at an early age, and it has never let go. Having released two of the 100 best albums of all time, as named by *Rolling Stone*, Thompson was recognized in his teens as a guitar player with vast potential.

The son of a London policeman, Thompson was a founding member of Fairport Convention, a band credited with helping to invent British folk-rock, at 17.

**'To me, music's serious — it can be fun, but there's a real intensity to it.'**

Although he grew up playing American rock 'n' roll of the '50s and '60s, the musical traditions of Old England shaped his music.

"I don't find that much that's innova-

tive or challenging in popular music," Thompson told Robert Lloyd of *L.A. Style*. "I listen to a lot of traditional music. I listen to classical music. I listen to jazz mostly. Even though I would never play jazz or classical music, it's a different place to explore for things you can put into your own music."

Essentially a solo artist since 1984, Thompson has often sat in with the likes of Bonnie Raitt and Crowded House, as well as playing with the Golden Palominos. It's a credit to his diversity that his songs have been recorded by the likes of Elvis Costello, the Pointer Sisters and Jo-El Sonnier.

Thompson himself will be releasing a new album later this summer, but his last offering, *Rumor and Sigh*, is full of the passionate songwriting and superb guitar playing that are his trademark. Focusing often on the darker sides of life, *Rumor and Sigh* explores such subjects as the frustration of a sexually misinformed youth, the love between a boy, a girl and a motorcycle, and even takes a stab at Margaret Thatcher.



"I suppose there's music that I want to hear that I don't hear other people doing, that would express what I would wish to say, and because it doesn't exist, I have to do it," said Thompson. "Or else become a seething psychopath."

Such a comment is an indication of the energy Thompson brings to his music. "Music is a healing medium. And to me, music's serious — it can be fun, but there's a real intensity to it," said Thompson. "I don't think popular music has to be the Archies all the time. It's grown up more than that in the last 10, 20, 30 years, it's capable of carrying a little more weight."

# NICKEL CREEK

*Young and honored*

Most hands would not be bragging if the average age of its members was 13. But with a new album under their belts and awards ranging from top honors in the Family Band Division of the Four Corner States Bluegrass Festival and the Bluegrass band division of the Colorado River Country Music Festival, Nickel Creek has much to brag about.

The band consists of 11-year-old Sara Watkins on fiddle; 12-year-old Chris Thile on guitar, mandolin and fiddle; and 16-year-old Sean Watkins on guitar and mandolin.

The three kids hold, respectively, the titles of junior national yodeling champ, Arizona mandolin champ and "one of California's best guitarists," according to Choo-Choo records, which released Nickel Creek's first album, *Little Cowpoke*.

To round out the band, Scott Thile, Chris' father, adds the bass.

The album is billed as a collection of America's favorite cowboy songs. The band will be performing in the Family Tent during the Festival.

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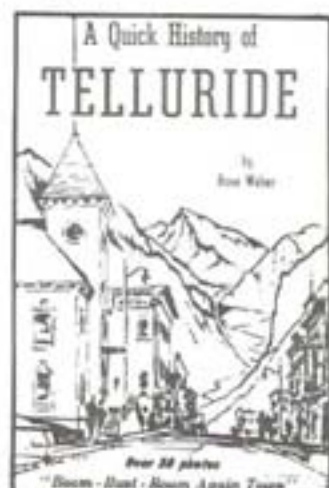
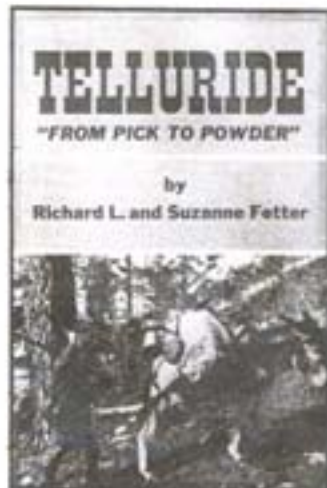
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# EMMYLOU HARRIS

Thursday, 8 to 9:30pm

Emmylou Harris takes the Fred Shellman Memorial Stage with Sam Bush and the rest of the Nash Ramblers Thursday evening. But don't be surprised if you see Harris lending her delicate and pure vocals to artists throughout the entire weekend. For some musicians the Telluride Bluegrass Festival is just another gig — they fly in the day of their show and out the next day. Not Emmylou. You can bet that when Dan Fogelberg closes the

**Armed with an oversized acoustic guitar, Harris proved to the Telluride faithful that she is the grand dame of country music.**

festival Sunday evening, Harris will still be soaking in Telluride's mellow and melodious vibes.

Harris is returning to Telluride for her third Bluegrass Festival, having played here in 1986 and 1992. Her two Telluride appearances mark distinct chapters in Harris' career.

For her inaugural Telluride perfor-

mance, Harris appeared along with the Hot Band, her musical partners for over 15 years. Together Harris and the Hot Band played hard-driving country music with a rock 'n' roll attitude. Harris and the Hot Band left a significant mark on popular music, selling millions of albums and earning four Grammy Awards (Harris won another Grammy for her debut solo album *Pieces of the Sky*).

Fronting a powerful electric band took its toll on Harris' vocal chords. After developing a bronchial infection a few years back, Harris realized it was time for a change. She decided to pursue a quieter, more acoustic sound.

To help her form her new band, Harris called upon mandolinist/fiddler extraordinaire and the King of the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, Sam Bush. Bush turned to dobroist Al Perkins, who had been a member of the Flying Burrito Brothers, Steven Still's "Manassas band," and had played with the Rolling Stones. Bush's mandolin and Perkins' dobro



replaced the electric and pedal steel guitars that drove the Hot Band.

Bush then recruited acoustic guitarist and vocalist John Randal Stewart, drummer Larry Atamanuik and bassist Ray Huskie, Jr., to round out the band he called the Nash Ramblers. Bassist Mark Winchester replaced Huskie in 1992.

And last year, Harris introduced Telluride to her new kinder, gentler sound. Armed with an oversized acoustic guitar, Harris proved to the Telluride faithful that she is the grand dame of country music.

Her voice and stage presence were as

dynamic as ever. She worked the crowd into a frenzy with her Number 1 hit from 1978 "Two More Bottles of Wine," and played several enchanting covers including Paul Simon's "The Boxer," Nanci Griffith's "It's A Hard Life Wherever You Go" and Bill Monroe's "Wake Up John" (you can expect to see Monroe join Harris for some buck dancing onstage Thursday night).

Harris' work with the Nash Ramblers may be easier on her voice, but it still puts the feet to work, and inspires awe for one of country music's most respected performers.

# MARY-CHAPIN CARPENTER

by Christy Surr

Distinct country  
Saturday, 7:15 to 8:30pm

The Telluride Bluegrass Festival and Mary-Chapin Carpenter have caught the same train to the big time.

Nineteen-ninety, the first year Carpenter appeared in the Bluegrass line-up and the year she released her second album, *Shooting Straight in the Dark*, was also the year that Telluride's Bluegrass Festival began its own steady growth in popularity and renown. It was therefore only appropriate that Carpenter hosted the National Public Radio program on the 1992 Bluegrass Festival. That special was produced by Boston radio station WGBH, and aired on public radio stations across the country this spring.

Indeed, Carpenter's career has begun to out-distance even Bluegrass. Her fourth release, *Come On Come On*, was released last summer and went platinum in six months. Its first single, "I Feel Lucky," earned Carpenter her second Grammy in as many years. She was named the Academy of Country Music's Female Vocalist of the Year for the second year in a row.



The music scene's own inability to categorize Carpenter or her music as strictly "country" makes this type of meteoric rise to the top of the charts even more amazing.

Carpenter's music has been described as everything from "intelligent country" to "sometimes folksy, sometimes bluesy sometimes funky."

Steve Hochman of the *L.A. Times* writes, "With her Ivy League roots and I-can-have-it-all stance, Mary-Chapin Carpenter is to traditional country music what Hillary Clinton is to traditional political wives."

This lack of categorization is preferred by Carpenter. In a telephone interview with the *Times-Journal*, she commented, "I've never taken much stock in catego-

ries. I find that they're kind of limiting. It doesn't really matter to me what bin I find a record in; if I like someone's music I'm going to listen to it. Music shouldn't be categorized as it is. There are a lot of good things that fall through the cracks; just because you can't categorize it doesn't mean it's not worth listening to. What do you call Bela Fleck's music? Brilliant, and that's enough."

Carpenter's own brilliance has now been fully recognized by audiences and critics alike, proven by her acceptance into music's mainstream in spite of her distinctly non-mainstream country style.

This style could be explained by Carpenter's distinctly non-country background. Born in Princeton, N.J.,

Carpenter moved to Japan for two years when her father, an executive for *Life* magazine, was transferred. It was there that Carpenter picked up her first guitar, a discarded instrument of her mother's, left over from what she described as "the Great Folk Music Scare" of the early '60s.

From Japan, the Carpenters moved to Washington, D.C., where the acoustic music scene further stimulated Carpenter's development. During her summers home from studying American Civilization at Brown University,

Carpenter finally "got the courage up [to] play the acoustic bar circuit" herself in D.C.

At the time her music reflected the wide range of Carpenter's musical influences, including the likes of Billie Holiday and Townes Van Sandt. Over time, she began working some of her own songs into her act.

With the encouragement of friend and bandmate John Jennings, Carpenter put together a tape of her own material "that I could sell out of my back pocket," she recalled. "That tape became the first

record [*Home-town Girl*]... It still kind of astounds me."

Even after two Grammys, Carpenter takes the same modest outlook on her prospects for the future. When asked about her

long-term goals, she replied, "I don't know if I think in terms of goals. It's more just a desire to look down the road four or five years, and say, 'Gosh, I hope I can still make records and I hope I can get a gig.' Every time a gig offer comes in, it's like, bless their hearts."

These qualities have shone through all of Carpenter's recordings.

It is what her gift has been to every kind of music, and it will certainly come out when she makes her fourth appearance on Telluride's Bluegrass stage Saturday evening.

**Carpenter's music has been described as everything from 'intelligent country' to 'sometimes folksy, sometimes bluesy sometimes funky.'**





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## Festival Schedule

### Thursday

- 12:00 - 12:50 Black Canyon Gang
- 1:00 - 1:50 Bluegrass Patriots
- 2:00 - 2:50 Tish Hinojosa
- 3:00 - 4:00 Mark O'Connor
- 4:15 - 5:30 The Iguanas
- 5:30 - 6:30 Dinner Break
- 6:30 - 7:45 Bill Monroe & The Bluegrass Boys
- 8:00 - 9:30 Emmylou Harris & The Nash Ramblers
- 10:00 - 11:30 Zachary Richard



Photos by Tom Brubaker

### Friday

- 9:00 - 9:50 Howard Bad Hand & The Hearbeat Singers & Robert Mirabal
- 10:00 - 10:50 Left Hand String Band
- 11:00 - 11:50 William Eaton
- 12:00 - 1:15 Sugarbeat
- 1:30 - 2:45 Robert Earl Keen Jr.
- 3:15 - 4:30 Tony Rice Unit
- 4:45 - 6:00 Peter Rowan & Awake Me In The New World
- 6:00 - 7:00 Dinner Break (Contest Finalists)
- 7:00 - 8:15 Shawn Colvin
- 8:30 - 10:00 Strength in Numbers
- 10:30 - 12:00 John Hiatt



Photos by Tom Brubaker



Photos by Tom Brubaker



### Saturday

- 9:00 - 10:15 Band Contest Finals
- 10:45 - 12:00 Laurie Lewis & Grant Street
- 12:15 - 1:30 Tim O'Brien & The O'Boys
- 1:45 - 3:00 Seldom Scene
- 3:15 - 4:30 Jerry Douglas, Russ Barenberg, Edgar Meyer
- 4:45 - 5:45 Afternoon siesta
- 5:45 - 7:00 Béla Fleck & The Flecktones
- 7:15 - 8:30 Mary-Chapin Carpenter
- 9:00 - ???? Sam Bush & John Cowan



Photos by Tom Brubaker



### Sunday

- 9:00 - 10:30 Howard Bad Hand & The Hearbeat Singers & Robert Mirabal
- 10:45 - 11:45 New Tradition
- 12:00 - 1:15 John Hartford
- 1:30 - 2:45 Del McCoury
- 3:15 - 4:30 Richard Thompson
- 4:45 - 6:00 Marc Cohn
- 6:00 - 6:45 Dinner Break (Troubador Winner)
- 7:00 - 8:15 Loreena McKennitt
- 8:30 - 10:00 Dan Fogelberg with Béla, Jerry, Sam & Special guests



Photos by Tom Brubaker



# TELLURIDE Bluegrass



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## Academy Workshops

The Telluride Bluegrass Academy workshops begin on Thursday, and offer a wide range of musical topics including performances, discussions and demonstrations. Look for special workshops to be announced daily, as well as workshops on Guitar Building, Guitar Maintenance, Mandolin, Harmony, Banjo, Songwriting, and a whole lot more. The final workshop schedule will be posted in town and at the front gate each morning before 10:00.

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3:00 Quiet Time Activities  
4:00 Storytelling in the Tipi  
5:00 Mysto the Magi

#### Friday

11:00 Songwriting with Jessica  
12:30 Katherine Dines  
2:00 Solar Cooking Class  
3:00 Nickel Creek  
4:00 Storytelling in the Tipi  
5:00 Mysto the Magi

#### Saturday

11:00 Songwriting with Jessica  
12:30 Katherine Dines  
2:00 Children's Showcase  
3:00 Nickel Creek  
4:00 Performing Practice  
5:00 Children's Performance

#### Sunday

11:00 Songwriting with Jessica  
12:30 Katherine Dines  
2:00 Quiet Time Activities  
3:00 Storytelling  
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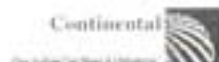
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The Telluride Bluegrass Festival is often referred to as the premier acoustic music festival in the country, largely because people like Mark O'Connor have chosen to come here year after year. O'Connor is one of the most respected musicians in the world. The fiddler, in high demand as a session player, has played on close to 500 different recordings in the last decade.

# MARK O'CONNOR

by Geoff Hanson

*Fiddle finesse*  
Thursday, 3 to 4pm

Artists as diverse as Michelle Shocked, James Taylor, Stephanie Grapelli, Dolly Parton, Chet Atkins, Nanci Griffith, Mary-Chapin Carpenter, Andres Vollenweider, Michael Brecker and Waylon Jennings have all called upon O'Connor to round out their sound with his extraordinary violin playing.

O'Connor is scheduled to perform a solo set Thursday in which he will play

violin, mandolin and guitar. This acoustic musician, known for the finesse, beauty and speed of his string work, will probably be exhausted by a one-hour set, although O'Connor attributes his many years as one of Nashville's most requested studio players with building up his endurance.

"I'll be playing my one-man show, which is stuff that I've written or collected over the years for solo instrumentation," O'Connor says. "It's physically draining to play an uninterrupted show because when you get onstage your adrenaline makes you work twice as hard without realizing it." The physical part was something that I was unsure about when I started doing these solo shows because I remember a while back during an ensemble performance I played one of my pieces, which is 14 minutes long. I was so tired and cramped when I finished that I had to take a break from the stage and let the other guys take over for a few minutes. Those last two or three years of working 12 to 15 hours a day doing session work has really built up my stamina and allowed me to play solo performances."

O'Connor is also slated to play Friday evening with Strength in Numbers.

"In Telluride, I'll get to feature the two sides of my music," O'Connor says. "When I play my solo show, I'm very upfront. And when I'm with Strength in Numbers I play a real supporting role. Those are the two avenues I've taken in my career and it's nice for me to be able



to do both in Telluride. As far as Strength in Numbers, I'm looking forward to performing with Sam, Bela, Edgar and Jerry. It's been two years and getting ready for the gig has been like re-learning the material all over again."

Artist Willie Matthews, who painted this year's festival poster, says that his 1990 poster which featured a lone fiddler playing a fiddle on a porch, and is considered by many the best bluegrass poster, was inspired by an O'Connor solo in 1989, which O'Connor says he remem-

bers well.

"That was one of the most memorable times I've ever had in Telluride," he says. "I was left alone to play a solo; I could hear the echoes of the solo violin bounce off the distant cliffs made of rock and I could hear the reflection back. It was like the world's largest echo chamber. It was really an amazing feeling."

O'Connor's achievements in music are even more remarkable considering that he is only 32 years old. By the age of three, he could identify certain classical

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► albums and composers. He was displaying remarkable dexterity on guitar by the age of seven and at 10 he won his first classical/flamenco contest at the University of Washington.

**'In Telluride, I'll get to feature the two sides of my music. When I play my solo show, I'm very upfront... with Strength in Numbers I play a real supporting role. Those are the two avenues I've taken in my career and it's nice for me to be able to do both'**

By age 11, O'Connor had added mandolin, dobro, banjo and the fiddle to the many instruments he could play. Rounder Records released his first album when he was 12, and he had five records to his credit before he turned 20.

O'Connor joined David Grisman's band as a guitar player in 1979. It was

while playing with Grisman that O'Connor first played at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. In 1981, O'Connor joined the innovative jazz/rock/fusion band the Dixie Dregs. In 1983, he moved to Nashville and began his run as a session player.

O'Connor has recorded five albums for Warner Brothers since 1985. His 1990 album, *The New Nashville Cats*, in which he was joined by over 50 other Nashville session players, earned him two awards from the Country Music Association for Best Vocal Event of the year and Musician of the Year. O'Connor also received a Grammy for that album.

For his latest album, O'Connor called upon 14 violinists who have inspired him over the years for an album of duets called *Heroes* (which is scheduled to be released this summer). The violinists he has assembled for his new album cover all styles of violin playing and include Charlie Daniels (for a version of "The Devil Went Down to Georgia"), Vassar Clements, Jean-Luc Ponty and Byron Berline among others.

Matt Glaser, chairman of the String Department at the Berkeley College of Music, wrote in the album's liner notes, "Never before in history have all the greatest performers on a single instrument been brought together across all boundaries of time, space and style.... The music contained herein is overflowing with joy, mutual respect, creativity, camaraderie and above all, love — love of the violin and its possibilities, love of music."

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# BILL MONROE

by Geoff Hanson

*Father of bluegrass — Thursday, 6:30 to 7:45pm*

Before Bill Monroe, bluegrass was what you found growing in Kentucky. After Bill Monroe, bluegrass became known as a kind of music.

The genre was named after Monroe's backup band, "The Bluegrass Boys," with whom Monroe appeared on the Grand Ole Opry radio program beginning in 1939. Some musicologists attribute the birth of bluegrass to the first song Monroe played that night in October 1939, "Muleskinner Blues."

**'As a musician, showman, composer, and teacher, Mr. Monroe has been a cultural figure and force of signal importance in our time.'**

Still others point to 1945 as the genesis of bluegrass. For it was then that a 22-year-old banjo player with a revolutionary

three-finger rolling picking style named Earl Scruggs joined the Bluegrass Boys. The rest of the outfit at that time included Lester Flatt on guitar, Chubby Wise on fiddle and Howard Watts on bass. That version of the Bluegrass Boys established itself as the standard by which all bluegrass bands have been measured. Unfortunately, the union lasted for only one year, and yielded 28 tunes.

Whichever theory you subscribe to, and Bill Monroe himself would point to the former thesis (it's his feeling that Flatt and Scruggs betrayed him) — one thing is certain: Bill Monroe is the father of bluegrass.

"I thought bluegrass music would get no further than the farmer," Monroe recalls. "I'd designed it that way because that's the way I thought he'd like it because that was where I was raised. Since then, it's spread and grown and it's all over the world."

Monroe was born in Kentucky in 1911 — the youngest of eight children. He began playing music with his older brothers as a child.

Monroe and his brothers made their

first leap into show business as square dancers for a touring road show in 1929. (Monroe is still known to enjoy a good jig, and one of his favorite partners is Emmylou Harris — look for them to engage in a little backdancing together.) In 1934, the Monroe brothers began performing music professionally. They stayed together until 1938 when they broke up. Monroe then founded the Bluegrass Boys in 1939.



"The state of Kentucky gave it the name," Monroe says. "I wanted to use some kind of name from the state so that people would know it was where I was from. So, I took the name bluegrass. There's not a prettier name in the world than that."

Ironically, Monroe left his native state

when he was 18, and the significant developments in his music occurred in the Carolinas, Georgia and Tennessee. Moreover, only one member of the Bluegrass Boys in the early years was from Kentucky. However, bluegrass music is synonymous with Kentucky because of Bill Monroe. The only other person who has done more for Kentucky in our collective imagination than Bill Monroe is Colonel Harland Sanders and his chicken.

Many of bluegrass' greatest players honed their chops in Bill Monroe's band. In the early '60s, Peter Rowan added his name to the impressive list of the Bluegrass Boys alumni.

Elvis Presley paid homage to Monroe by performing Monroe's ditty, "Blue Moon of Kentucky," on the flip side of his first record, "That's All Right Mama." In 1970, the Country Music Association recognized Monroe's contributions by electing him into the Country Music Hall of Fame. On August 13, 1986, the United States Senate passed a resolution recognizing and honoring Monroe's "many contributions to American culture and music and his many ways of helping American people enjoy themselves... As a musician, showman, composer, and teacher Mr. Monroe has been a cultural figure and force of signal importance in our time."

Opportunities to see a living legend like Monroe do not come along often. The 1993 Telluride Bluegrass Festival is graced by his presence.



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# SHAWN COLVIN

*A long way from rock — Friday, 7 to 8:15pm*

For Shawn Colvin, success did not come quickly. Colvin has been playing music professionally for 17 years and paid her dues with long years on the New York and San Francisco club circuit. Colvin even quit playing twice due to burnout, both mentally and physically, only to return more determined than before.

Now 35, Colvin has hit the big time in the past four years, with two major record releases and a 1991 Grammy award for best contemporary folk recording.

Colvin has played twice at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, and she and Mary-Chapin Carpenter, a close friend who will also be at this year's Bluegrass, often crash each other's sets. An intimate workshop put on by Colvin and Carpenter in Elks Park was considered a highlight of last year's festival by many.

During the past few years, Colvin has also toured, recorded or appeared with Bruce Hornsby, Suzanne Vega, Richard Thompson, Jackson Browne, Rickie Lee Jones, Booker T. Jones and many others, including a knockout performance with Carpenter and Rosanne Cash at the Bob Dylan tribute concert last fall.

Colvin has come a long way from the

southern plains of South Dakota.

She was born in 1958 in Vermillion, S.D., a town of around 7000 people. Her father played the banjo and guitar and was an avid "folkie" who often put on concerts for family and friends on the front lawn.

Colvin caught the musical bug, and beginning in high school (by then the family had moved to Carbondale, Ill.), she performed both folk and rock. She attended Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, but dropped out to form the Shawn Colvin Band.

But fronting for the hard rock band damaged her vocal chords, so she took up an offer to play with the Dixie Daisies country swing band. With her voice failing to improve, she went back to school, tried fashion design for "a couple of weeks," went to a speech therapist and then began playing again.

San Francisco and New York were the next two stops for the Colvin caravan, as she performed with a country and western outfit called the Buddy Miller Band, and as a duo with bassist John Leventhal, who went on to become her boyfriend and close collaborator for many years.

Colvin also performed solo, immers-



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► ing herself in New York's thriving Greenwich Village folk scene. Soon she was everywhere. "One week in the Village Voice there were five ads for me," recalls Colvin, "playing Folk City opening for Rick Danko; playing the Other End, Kenny's Castaways, Home and City Limits. I have it in my scrapbook."

**'I sort of made the mature decision to pursue singing as a career. I realized that singing was what I loved to do, what I could do well and what was really the only thing I wanted to do.'**

After six years in New York, Colvin had built a solid reputation, but was tired of the life. "At that point I'd burned out on the bar scene," says Colvin. "I thought, 'I'd really better question what I'm doing with my life' because I didn't

have any recording aspirations that were really worthy, and I'd never really written any music and didn't think I could write. I didn't want to play bars for the rest of my life so I quit playing for a year."

After a year, though, Colvin returned. "I sort of made the mature decision to pursue singing as a career. I realized that singing was what I loved to do, what I could do well and what was really the only thing I wanted to do."

Her career began to take off. In 1987, she sang backup on Vega's hit "Luca," and toured Europe with her. The following year she was signed by Columbia Records, and her debut album, *Steady On*, was awarded a Grammy in 1991.

In 1992 she released *Fat City* to rave reviews. *The Chicago Tribune* called it "a stunning work of contemporary folk-pop from one of its leading lights," and the *New York Daily News* wrote, "If there's such a thing as 'alternative radio,' Colvin should be like a gift dropped in its lap."

The album is much more upbeat than her previous work, and represents the new relationship in her life after her break-up with Leventhal.

Colvin had originally thought of *Fat City* as a concept album about her life without a romantic relationship. "I thought, you know, a lot of these things are gonna be about making the best of being alone. But then I fell in love, and it changed the tone of the songs I'd written and inspired others, songs I didn't know were gonna be written. So the joke was on me, I'm happy to say."

## LEFT HAND STRING BAND

by Dana Quiry

Friday, 10 to 10:50am

Two summers ago I was wandering home after an evening of debauchery with some friends, when we stumbled upon a guitar case lying on the side of Colorado Ave. No one was around so we brought the instrument home with us and left it on our front porch expecting that the owner might come along and reclaim it. Sure enough, the next day some scraggly

looking fellows showed up on our porch and inquired about our find.

They said they were in a band that was playing a few gigs in town and they really need their guitar back. So we traded the guitar for free admission to their show that night. The pounding slam-grass performance that night was my introduction to Leftover Salmon, a band that apparently never cared about the little things.

Reconstituted as the Left Hand String Band, former Salmon members Drew

Emmett, Mark Vann, Rob Wheeler and founder Glenn Keefe will rock the Telluride Bluegrass Festival stage with their potent mix of rock 'n' roll and bluegrass.

Never satisfied, this energetic ensemble strives for novelty and creativity. The band is known for straying far from the tradition of poverty and solidarity that is

essential in some definitions of bluegrass music. Their style could be considered progressive, even reckless, and it is no coincidence that the result

**Their style could be considered progressive, even reckless, and it is no coincidence that the result is startling.**

is startling.

These are talented musicians. Vann was the 1988 champion of the Telluride banjo contest, and Wheeler is a noted Nashville studio musician. Emmet and Keefe bring decades of experience and enthusiasm to round out the line up. With their liberated style and driving sound, Left Hand String Band will surely get the crowd stomping.

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# TISH HINOJOSA

Folk heritage  
Thursday, 2 to 2:50pm

Tish Hinojosa (ee-no-HO-sah) could be one of the most difficult musicians to categorize. But that difficulty reflects the rich variety of her music on albums like *Culture Swing*, which she produced, and *Aguella Noche*, a live, all-Spanish performance that celebrates Cinco de Mayo.

## I embrace what has made me American ...!

Born in Mexico and raised in Texas, Hinojosa's music, in songs from *Culture Swing* like "Something in the Rain" — which documents the plight of workers who are exposed to hazardous pesticides — reflects her heritage. But her two years in Nashville can also be heard on tunes like "San Antonio Romeo." She has also developed a folk following after winning



the new folk songwriters competition at the Kerrville Folk Festival in central Texas.

In fact, her 1989 release *Homeland* was the best-selling album in Austin by an Austin artist for that year.

"Although I do write and sing about my cultural upbringing," she says, "my music isn't only that. I think once people listen to the music, whether in person or on record, hopefully they understand that all the influences fit together into a cohesive perspective."

In the liner notes to *Culture Swing*, Hinojosa sheds a bit of light on what musical expression means to her:

"I embrace what has made me American or simply that which draws out humanity: the Oklahoma dust between the lines of a Haggard song, the misty Appalachians piercing from Hazel Dickens' eyes in the Memphis soul in the swell of Booker T's B-3, or savoring the #9 Seafood Plate with a Tsing-Tao beer at the Thai Kitchen in Austin. It's all ours to question, to celebrate and to pass on."

# BLACK CANYON BAND

Thursday, 12 to 12:50pm

This year's festival kicks off with the Black Canyon Band, one of the original three bands to play at the inaugural Telluride Bluegrass Festival in 1973.

That year, the Black Canyon Gang consisted of Russ Austin, R.D. Mount and Bill Austin, Jr. on guitar and Paul Hunter on bass. Everybody in the band sang. "It was a guitar sing-along band, kind of like a Peter, Paul and Mary folk thing," Austin said.

By the second year, the band had dropped Hunter, and Mount began playing bass. The Austin brothers stayed on as guitar players, and they added Bart Lyons on banjo and Todd Jeralie on drums. The same line-up will be performing at this year's festival.

The Black Canyon Band broke up in 1983. However, the band members have remained in close contact in the decade since. Every Memorial Day Weekend, the Black Canyon Gang gets together to visit and play music.

"The whole gang is really excited, we can't wait to do it. We're going to play a lot of old Black Canyon stuff."

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The mandolin is featured on the 20th anniversary Telluride Bluegrass Festival poster. Because it is the instrument with which Sam Bush practices his craft, and because Bill Monroe, the man credited with inventing bluegrass music did his trailblazing with a mandolin, it is only appropriate we give this eight-stringed instrument its due.

# THE HISTORY OF THE MANDOLIN

by Geoff Hanson

*In honor of the eight-string instrument: Musicians and the mandolin*

Indeed, Bill Monroe and Sam Bush have done more for the mandolin than any two other musicians, though David Grisman has certainly stretched the boundaries of the instrument as well.

The mandolin is a direct descendant of

the mandora, a miniature lute that appears in Italian art as far back as the 14th century. In the Agnolo Gaddi painting, *The Coronation of a Virgin* (1369-1396), an angel can be seen playing the mandora.

The mandora evolved into the mandolino in the 1700s. Mandolins began arriving in America in colonial times, though they weren't heard very often until Italian immigrants began immigrating to the U.S. in mass numbers in the 1880s. From Italian hamlets on the eastern seaboard, the instrument began to spread.

By 1900, the Chicago-based Lyon and Healy Company wrote in its catalogue, "At any time you find in our factory upwards of 10,000 mandolins in various stages of construction. In 1905, the Sears catalogue contained six pages of American-made mandolins. It was through the Sears catalogue that the mandolin was introduced to the rural South where it emerged as a prominent instrument in country and bluegrass music.

The Neapolitan mandolin featured a round back, which was slowly transformed in America into what is known as an F-style mandolin. It was Bill Monroe who first began to legitimize the diminutive instrument. Monroe wanted to play fiddle, but that instrument was already spoken for in his family by his older brother Birch. Monroe's second choice was the guitar, but that was taken by Charlie Monroe.

So the 10-year-old was forced to take up the mandolin. However, the older brothers strung the mandolin with four



strings (like a ukelele), for Bill was intended to be seen and not heard.

**While Bill Monroe attacked the mandolin like some of the aggressive fiddlers, Bush took to the mandolin like a mad electric guitar player — a Jimi Hendrix if you will.**

Monroe's experience was not uncommon. In the early years of the 20th century, the mandolin was perceived as a

children's instrument because of its size. But Monroe changed that. He approached mandolin with an aggressive style that no one had ever seen before — until Sam Bush came along.

While Bill Monroe attacked the mandolin like some of the aggressive fiddlers of the day, Bush took to the mandolin like a mad electric guitar player — a Jimi Hendrix if you will.

Bush also began experimenting with different kinds of mandolins. He was one of the pioneers of the mandobro — a cross between a mandolin and a dobro. And it was Bush who inspired Bela Fleck to experiment with different kinds of banjo and bunjo effects. Through Bush, the once lowly mandolin has begun to influence more traditional stringed instruments like the banjo.



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High On A Mountaintop - *Hot Rize*  
Purple Hay - *Strange Rangers*  
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# PETER ROWAN

by David Owen

Exploring rock genres  
Friday, 4:45 to 6pm

Peter Rowan says it is the Telluride crowd that brings him back every year. "Telluride is one of those things," said Rowan in a telephone interview. "I just got to be there."

"I don't really have control; it kind of starts to live on its own," he added about the experience of stepping onto the bluegrass stage. "I look out at the mountains and feel the support of the crowd, and play to the vastness of the valley. When I finally get my breath back, there is an energy that takes over. It gets wild."

Rowan was born and raised near Boston. He learned music from the radio and the influences of Southern sailors

stationed there after World War II. He recalled coming into Boston's Combat Zone, with its burlesque shows and tango parlors, listening and absorbing. He heard the likes of Joan Baez come out of the area and he soaked up the many different influences. "I liked the folk music and the blues and the ballad stories," he said. "For me, bluegrass incorporated all those elements the best."

After graduating from Colgate University in 1961, Rowan followed a musical path that led to stints with his idol, bluegrass legend Bill Monroe, and an album with Old and in the Way, a bluegrass band that included Jerry Garcia.

Rowan has continued to try to embrace different influences in his music. Past projects have explored the genres of rock, Tex-Mex, Irish and reggae, among others.

His latest project, *Awake Me in the New World*, is a musical journey into the perpetually new world of love, through the eyes of a member of Columbus' crew during his voyages. The album is yet another attempt by Rowan to poignantly capture the music of another world. "I use

my own style to forge all the different influences together; this is New World music."

In addition to the new material, Rowan promises plenty of old-fashioned bluegrass.

**'I don't really have control; it kind of starts to live on its own. I look out at the mountains and feel the support of the crowd, and play to the vastness of the valley. When I finally get my breath back, there is an energy that takes over. It gets wild.'**

He said he and his two brothers, Christopher and Lorin, are about 75 percent done with a new bluegrass record, and they plan to play much of it in Sheridan Opera House seminars.

Rowan, a practicing Buddhist, said his life and his music have been about openness and love. "There is a flow, a sense of returning to life," said Rowan. "I look at experiences and say, 'Did I live it? Did I dream it? Did

I write it down?' You need a forum to express yourself and mine is music. My songs usually have a life of their own. I am just the vehicle for writing them down. I really just have to stay open and wait for the songs to come to me.

"My life has not been to shut anything down, it has been about keeping it open," Rowan added. "I am constantly trying to get it right so it has meaning and flavor."

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# MARC COHN

by David Owen

*Feelings of fatherhood and family*  
**Sunday 4:45 to 6pm**

Marc Cohn is on a roll.

The year 1991 saw his life change forever. He released his debut self-titled album, which, powered by the single "Walking in Memphis," reached certified gold sales in February 1992. That same month saw Cohn win the Grammy for Best New Artist.

"There's a period of adjustment that takes place when things that used to be part of your fantasy life cross over to become part of your daily existence," says Cohn.

Following the success of the first album, Cohn has recently released *The Rainy Season*. Themes of fatherhood and family are felt throughout the new offering. "At the moment my son was born, I hit the road to support my first album," Cohn says. "That's a lot to have happen concurrently. So, for the better part of a year, I struggled with feelings of disconnectedness and the need to retain some kind of balance in my life."

Cohn, who grew up in Cleveland, lists

Van Morrison, Jackson Browne and The Band as his musical influences. He began playing guitar and writing songs in junior high, and eventually taught himself to play piano while at Oberlin College in Ohio.

He played in Los Angeles and then in a 14-piece band in New York before deciding to set out on his own to concentrate on songwriting.


The new album features more of a band feel than his debut, and boasts such musical guests as David Crosby, Graham Nash, Bonnie Raitt and David Hidalgo of Los Lobos.

**The single 'Walking in Memphis' reached gold sales in February of '92. The same month Cohn won the Grammy for Best New Artist.**

"I wanted my new album to connect in some way with the last one," explains Cohn, "so that it wasn't a complete departure. At the same time, I didn't want to make this my debut record, part two. I thought it was important that a large part of this album feel like it was made by a band."

"A lot has changed for me since the first record came out," Cohn continues. "I used this record to try and come to terms with those changes and, ultimately, to help me welcome them in."

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2437	Sat., Sun.	2:28pm	3:48pm
2431	Daily	4:53pm	6:05pm

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Flight #	Days	Departure	Arrival
2424	Daily	9:50am	11:00am
2430	Daily	12:10pm	1:27pm
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# ZACHARY RICHARD

by Geoff Hazton

Thursday, 10 to 11:30pm

Thursday evening, Bluegrass audiences can expect to *laissez le bon temps rouler* when Zachary Richard takes the Fred Shelmton Memorial Stage. Armed with his guitar, accordion and gritty vocals, Richard is sure to punctuate the first day of the festival with an exclamation point.

Richard is one of the most outspoken and often controversial figures in Louisiana's music world. He says his music is defined by what it isn't more than by what it is. "Since most people gathering in Telluride for a Bluegrass Festival will never have even heard of Zachary Richard (pronounced tee-shard), it might be a good idea to let the man start with a clean slate and define his own music."

"I would begin by describing myself as a songwriter, a songwriter from Louisiana," Richard said in an interview conducted in New Orleans where he was performing in that city's legendary Jazz and Heritage Festival. "I write songs that are inspired generally by Louisiana experiences. But there are a lot of differ-

ent plates at the table that I eat at. There's zydeco and Cajun, and New Orleans rhythm and blues, and rock 'n' roll."

In September 1992, Richard released his 12th album, *Snake Bite Love*—the second album that he has recorded for A&M records. The first single from that album, "Come on, Sheila," reached number two on the newly created adult alternative chart.

"The album's doing very well but it's still relegated to the fringes as opposed to the middle of the road," Richard said. "We're enjoying kind of an obscure success, but it's nevertheless the first time I've ever had any kind of chart action on American radio. I've been played, but to be able to actually get on a chart is a new experience for me. I haven't made a radically different record, but I guess there is an audience for the kind of thing I do."

Richard grew up outside of Lafayette, La., in a small town called Scott. His first musical experiences were singing in the boys choir at the local church. Richard



feels that his greatest talent is as a singer, and he credits his choir days for giving him his ear. In his early teens, Richard began playing acoustic guitar, copying licks from the Rolling Stones and Dylan. While attending college in New Orleans, Richard discovered the blues and began writing his first songs, which he described as "folk rock."

On the strength of that material, Richard signed a contract with Electra Records. Richard was the last person to

sign with Electra before it merged with Asylum, and because of the intramural politics, the album Richard recorded in the spring of 1973 never got released. Richard said that experience taught him a lesson in reality, but more importantly, he used the money from the deal to buy a Cajun accordion. He would never be the same.

"When I discovered the music, it was a little bit more than an accident, but it was not the passion that it became for me later," Richard said. "It was an intrigue. I was looking to develop myself as a musician, I was also looking for a part of an identity. I got the accordion and was turned on to this whole world of traditional Cajun music, and I began to learn how to play the old songs."

"I'm happy that someone has the open-mindedness to put together a mixed lineup like this," said Richard. "And I think people will dig it because people are tired of seeing the same old thing. Take the way that Bela Fleck approaches his music, you can't call that bluegrass music. He plays with a classical technique, he's a phenomenal player. He's pushing the boundaries of whatever style you want to call it. It ain't country, and there's a lot of things you can say it ain't, and those are the kind of people I generally like. If it's all going to be the same thing over and over again, we might as well all just stop."

# SELDOM SCENE

Irreverent and witty  
Saturday, 1:45 to 3pm

It is seldom a band that has lasted this long sounds so good. To celebrate the band's 20th birthday two years ago, the Washington D.C.-based bluegrass outfit Seldom Scene gathered at the Birchmont, an Alexandria, Va., club that has hosted the band for more than 500 evenings over its existence, to record a 26-song, two-CD collection called *Scene 20*. All eight past and present members of the band convened for two sold-out nights at its old haunt. Emmylou Harris, who has worked with two current members, joined the band for the blowout.

According to the band, what started as a weekly card game has evolved into one of the country's most acclaimed bluegrass bands. The band's success is paralleled by the success of its individual members. In addition to being featured on *Entertainment Tonight* and *Nashville Now*, individual and group awards include Best Band, Best Recording, Best Vocal Group, Entertainer of the Year and Grammy finalists and Grammy winners.

The line-up features Jon Duffy on mandolin, Mike Auldridge on dobro, John Starling on guitar and lead vocals, Ben



Eldridge on banjo and T. Michael Coleman on bass.

Duffy, who has often been called the "father of modern bluegrass," was an original member of the Country Gentlemen 30 years ago and he helped found the Scene in 1971. Duffy created the Scene as an irreverent and witty band at a time when most bluegrass bands were formal and stiff. Widely considered one of the best two or three dobro players in the world, Auldridge has released seven solo albums and recorded with such talents as Linda Ronstadt, Dolly Parton, Hank Williams, Jr., Mary-Chapin Carpenter and

Harris.

A founding member of the Scene, Starling has returned to ply his gift of adapting non-bluegrass songs to the Seldom Scene sound after a 15-year absence from the band. In addition to recording two solo albums during his hiatus from the Scene, Starling served as musical director for the "Trio" release by Harris, Ronstadt and Parton. He also pocketed a Grammy for his 1991 "Spring Training" collaboration with Carl Jackson.

Eldridge's gleaming eyes and hunched-over style of banjo playing have

earned him accolades from music critics and his band mates, who credit him with creating new songs and wearing a "possum grin."

Producer, songwriter and bassist Coleman has recorded with the likes of Doc Watson, Johnny Cash and Don Williams.

Music critic Mike Joyce caught Coleman at the recording of *Scene 20* and became an fan, writing: "For his part, Coleman adds a resonating bottom to the band's increasingly progressive string band sound, impressive skills as a songwriter and, like the notoriously irrepressible Duffy, a little humor as well."





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New Dimensions	Laurel Canyon A Musical Abyss	9	Music with Pat - Turn it Up or Turn it Off OR Town Council (on Council Tues- day)	Terrible Terry's Wednesday Wahoo OR The Wonder Show	Joan of Rock - Progressive & Retrospective Rock	9	The Christian Fellowship Hour	No Man's Land - Telluride's Favorite Place to be Saturday AM
Karen's Musical Palette & Potpourri OR Journeys-New Age	Trash or Treasure KOTO Yard Sale	10		Pazz & Jop - A musical potpourri	Album Feature - Something New	10	The Lucid Show - Music with a Non-Stop Beat	
	Teen Hall Tells All/ County Lines	11				11		
Steve West OR The Mr. Leo Show	Madonna Scatolacci OR Waiting Matilda	12	Bach's Lunch Classical Music	Bluestage - From NPR	Bach's Lunch Classical Music	12	Car Talk - NPR's Popular Car Guys	Crossroads OR Gettin' by with Adam
		1	Thistle & Shamrock OR Club Del Sol	White Buffalo - No Dead, No Dread, No Damn Bluegrass	Captain Jim - Just Good Music	1	R & B with the Ax Man	
Jammin' with Jezebel OR Pandora's Box	Fresh Air - NPR interviews	2	E-Town - NPR's ECO Variety Show			2		
	Creamcheese States - Familiar Light Rock	3	Lily of the Valley Cajun, Blues and Anything Else You Wouldn't Expect	White Trash Radio - C&W OR Farmer John	Brilliant Corners with Bossa Profundo - Expect the unexpected	3	The Uncle Willy Show - R&B Suitable For Gettin' Off	Jazz Thang
Hongo - R&B OR Dead Air	All Things Considered - NPR News	5	All Things Considered- NPR News	All Things Considered- NPR News	All Things Considered- NPR News	5	All Things Considered- NPR News	
	KOTO Eve. News	6	KOTO Eve. News NPR Native News	KOTO Eve. News High Pins. News	KOTO Eve. News Art Talk	6	KOTO Eve. News	The Farm Show - Mon-loc from the Barnyard with Guest Host Buzz Roanoke
Sunday Evening Classical OR Basic Blue Radio	Jumpin' Jan - Steely Dan & more of your R&B favorites	7	The Best in Jazz	Vin Rose Show - Easy Listening OR Dogs Run Free - "Around the World"	Obscene Steven Clean - C&W	7	Jerry Bonafigo Rockin' Remnants Show - Bill Haley, Buddy Holly, and of course MOORE Chuck Berry	
		8			4th World Radio	8		
Loose Frets - Fine Bluegrass OR Sunday Evening Jazz with Steve Scheln	The Electric Angel The Message of Love - from Rude to Romantic OR Mr. Wabber's Neighborhood	9	Heartbeat of Zion - Ultimate Reggae/ Dance Hall, Roots & Rasta	Abby Road Show OR The Beat, The Rhythm & The Dance	Lyvin' Large Late Night	9	Rockin' Rob - Your Rocky Mountain Rock'n Roll Potpourri - It's Friday Night, Let's Party	Nocturnal Emission/ Radio Ranch
		10		Nighthawk Radio	Wah! to Wah! Radio	10		
Stuntman OR Dr. Strangelove	NO Class Radio	11				11		
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# LOREENA MCKENNITT

by Dana Query

*Pure and timeless vocals*  
Sunday, 7 to 8:15pm

Singer, harpist and composer Loreena McKennitt defies simple characterizations. She also has defied the dictates of conventional wisdom in the recording industry throughout her career. A thoughtful and talented musician, McKennitt hails from Canada, and brings with her one of the most original sounds that will be heard at the festival this year.

The recipient of a Juno, Canada's version of the Grammy Award, McKennitt came to success mostly

through her efforts as her own manager and promoter, and as the head of her own recording label, Quinlan Road.

"Many artists have allowed themselves to fall prey to the myth that they should be protected from, or not troubled by, the political and economic forces which come to affect or direct their careers," McKennitt says. "Until we as artists take control of our own careers and creations, we can expect to encounter tremendous inequities in the system and structure of the music industry."

Aside from her business talents, McKennitt is an enormously talented musician and creative composer. Add to that a voice that is hauntingly beautiful. A listen to her most recent album, *The Visit*, will prove that even amidst the hustle and bustle of modern living, pure and timeless values remain.

*The Visit* features McKennitt's interpretation of the traditional "Greensleeves," perhaps the most mournful version recorded, and the Tennyson poem, "Lady of Shalott," which extends a full 11 minutes.

McKennitt speaks of her music in

Falls" and "Paint the Town Red."

Keen's humor may remind some of Lyle Lovett, a buddy of his at Texas A&M, but comparisons are risky. This is a highly original singer/songwriter who is a standout, even among the phenomenally successful group of fellow Texans that includes Lovett and Griffith. "An evening with Keen can encompass bass fishing, bluegrass festivals, testosterone, and the boy-girl thing," one critic has noted.

Consider also Keen's background. Raised by a petroleum engineer and a lawyer, he was a consummate beer-drinking and bluegrass-listening bass fisherman. Armed with an Aggie English degree and his 1984 album *No Kindsa Dancers*, Keen set out for Nashville with a few borrowed dollars.

Two long years of door pounding disillusioned Keen and after his car broke down and his home was ransacked by burglars he decided he had had enough of Music City. With that, he left a sign on his front door reading "Gone to Texas," and he returned home. It took only seven months for Keen to regain his gumption, and when he returned to Nashville his career was on the up and up.

He landed a songwriting deal, and then released two albums.

Since then he has been on the television shows *Austin City Limits*, *The Texas Connection* and *New Country*, and he's sung on NPR's *E-Town* and *Mountain Stage*. Peter Bogdanovich's recent movie, *The Thing Called Love*, also features Keen's work.

With this impressive resume, Keen will face high expectations from this year's Bluegrass crowd. No doubt he will fulfill them.

**A talented musician,  
McKennitt brings with  
her one of the most  
original sounds that  
will be heard.**

evanescent terms: "I've long considered the creative impulse to be a 'visit' — certainly it arrives (often unbidden!) in my life, usually after knocking on the door a few times. I wait for its arrival, and do my best to prepare for it."

In her live appearances, McKennitt has received countless standing ovations. In fact, it was word of mouth, rather than airplay, that brought her to the international renown she now enjoys. Her musical support includes guitarist Brian Hughes, who leads a jazz fusion group when not playing with McKennitt; bassist George Koller (who is also a member of the Shuffle Demons); percussionist Rick Lazar; and cellist Anne Bourne.



# ROBERT EARL KEEN

by Dana Query

*Beer, bluegrass and bass*  
Friday, 1:30 to 2:45pm

Hailing from Bandera, Tex., Cowboy Capital of the World, Robert Earl Keen is a crazy songwriter whose dry wit and quirky tales will endear him to almost any audience. Making his first appearance in Telluride, Keen is sure to be a huge hit.

His songs have been performed by Kelly Willis, Lyle Lovett and Nanci Griffith, and he has shared stages with Emmylou Harris and Mojo Nixon, but it's

**His live act features moving love songs  
and hilarious send-ups. Keen also  
rattles off story songs that casually  
depict gunpacking outlaws and crazy  
cowboys.**

not just because of his famous friends that Keen is such a highly anticipated act. Keen has proven himself as an abundantly talented singer and guitarist.

His live act features moving love songs and hilarious send-ups. Keen also rattles off story songs that casually depict gunpacking outlaws and crazy cowboys. His recent album, *A Bigger Piece of Sky*, boasts the hit "Daddy Had a Buick" as well as the beautiful "Whenever Kindness

# TONY RICE

by Eric Krell

*Friday, 3:15 to 4:30pm*

Tony Rice is not an easy man to figure out. Is he a superior guitar picker? Is he a bluegrass singer? A jazz guitarist?

The best answer appears to be all of the above. While defying categorization, Rice has released an impressive array of musical expressions. Since the start of his career in the '60s, Rice has played with a rich variety of bands — all of which honed his guitar and vocal skills for a successful solo career that includes 15 releases. Additionally, he has toured and recorded with Ricky Skaggs and Mary-Chapin Carpenter.

"To talk about his playing is to use the adjective 'so' a lot — so fast, so precise, so soulful. It's not Motown soul, but it's soul," gushed Sam Hodges of the *Orlando Sentinel*.

"Rice pays his respects to tradition, using his innovative ideas to breathe new life into old standards," praised Scott Alarik in *The Boston Globe*.

"He seems at last to have successfully fused the bluegrass and jazz elements that in the past sent his style spinning through different orbits. His singing also shows (not that there was any doubt) that he's a serious contender as a major headliner," noted Phil Hood of *Frets Magazine*.

Born in Danville, Va., Rice, who is now in his early 40s, grew up in Southern California. He and his three brothers received musical tips from their father,

Herb, who played guitar and mandolin in several bluegrass and country groups during the 1950s and '60s. Although Southern California is not considered a bluegrass mecca, the folk revival hit the area in the early '60s, and Rice had the opportunity to learn from musicians like Ry Cooder and Chris Hillman.

He headed to the Bluegrass State in 1970, where he joined his brother, Larry, in J.D. Crowe's New South. The legendary Skaggs replaced Larry in 1974 and Rice has credited Skaggs for the rebirth of the band.

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**— Sam Hodges,  
Orlando Sentinel**

But Rice wanted to continue his development as a musician and he returned to California in '75 to join the David Grisman Quintet. During his four-year stint with Grisman, a talented mandolinist who fused elements of bluegrass, jazz and classical, Rice earned a reputation as one of the best flatpickers in music.

Rice's current outfit, the Tony Rice Unit, includes his younger brother Wyatt, a critically acclaimed rhythm guitarist. On one of his most recent albums, *Native American*, Rice pays a moving tribute to some of his favorite folk songwriters.



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# THE IGUANAS

by Geoff Hanson

Red beans, rice and jams  
Thursday, 4:15 to 5:30pm

It's Friday night at the Mid City Bowling Lanes in New Orleans, known to those in The City That Care Forgot as "the rock 'n' bowl," where bowling and rock 'n' roll have forged a powerful union. Five guys looking like they just stepped out of a thrift shop hop up on stage, and soon the sounds of falling pins have been replaced by a compendium of musical styles ranging from r&b to Tex-Mex to country to Mexican conjunto music.

Welcome to the world of the Iguanas, where all is fair in love and music and where the band just might play all night long.

"One thing we like about New Orleans is that no one ever tells you to stop playing," said front man Joe Cabral, who plays tenor sax, and sings for the band. "If we're on, we'll play all night."

The Iguanas' have succeeded in taking the Crescent City by storm. In 1990, the Iguanas received a Big Easy Award for Best Emerging Talent. A year later came a Big Easy Award for Best Rock Band.

Before they knew it, the Iguanas were playing stadium shows warming up for

Jimmy Buffet. Buffet was so enthralled with the Iguanas' sound, he signed them to his new label Margaritaville, and paired them with famed producer Justin Neibank.

While the Iguanas may be one of the hottest emerging bands from New Orleans, the band's roots are in Colorado. Cabral met guitar player and vocalist Rod Hodges in Fort Collins at the The Bear and The Whale's weekly Monday night jam sessions. The two became instant friends, and they eventually formed a rhythm and blues trio called the Juke Box Naturals.

While living in Fort Collins, Hodges and Cabral befriended the Subdudes, who had recently relocated from New Orleans. Cabral and Hodges joined the Subdudes in a regular Monday night ritual of cooking red beans and rice and jamming afterwards. Cabral and Hodges were feeling amish in Fort Collins and The Subdudes encouraged the two musicians to move to New Orleans.

In New Orleans, Hodges and Cabral teamed up with veteran drummer Willie Panker (Panker has since been replaced by Doug Garrison). After adding Rene Coman on bass, the band started calling themselves the Iguanas.

"We needed a name for the band, and Rod and his wife were in Mexico, and they noticed a lot of iguanas there," Cabral said in an interview conducted from his home in New Orleans. "They figured it was a cool name for a band. They came back from Mexico with that suggestion, and we ran with it."

Tenor sax player Derek Huston arrived in New Orleans in 1990. Not long after Huston's arrival, the Iguanas became the first five-piece in rock 'n' roll history to feature two tenor saxophonists. "Almost



50 percent of the band is saxophones," Cabral quipped. "We like that."

Cabral steps up to the microphone at the Rock 'n' bowl and says, "Here's a new one." The band then launches into a ditty called "My Girlfriend is a Waitress." The chorus goes, "My girlfriend is a waitress, my girlfriend is a waitress, I love her and I'm gonna pick her up from work tonight." Everyday stuff indeed. The waitresses go crazy, the waitresses' boyfriends go crazy. All is well at the Rock 'n' Bowl.

"When I was in high school, I got an offer from a rock 'n' roll band, and I thought that I would put the Mexican music behind me," Cabral said. "I liked the music, but I never really thought I would play it on my own. When I met Rod, we realized we both had this thing

for Flaco Jimenez (who inspired Hodges to learn the accordion) and conjunto music from Texas. I knew all of these songs from playing in my dad's band, and we just started to work the music into the Iguanas' repertoire."

People immediately started comparing the Iguanas to Los Lobos, and Cabral is honored by the comparisons. Cabral was downright floored when David Hidalgo of Los Lobos referred to the Iguanas as "the best rock 'n' roll band in America." Hidalgo is not the only person bestowing praise on the Iguanas. Their debut album is receiving universal praise from critics everywhere, not to mention plenty of airtime on Telluride's own commercial free, consummately cool radio station, KOTO.



## DEL MCCOURY

Sunday, 1:30 to 2:45pm

While he calls himself "a basically happy person," Del McCoury admits he has a fascination for the darker side of country and bluegrass. "I wonder about that, why I tend to go for that kind of songs," says McCoury. "They're kind of shocking, you know, with the messages they have, but I think I like to sing the kind of songs that have real deep feelings."

What McCoury need not wonder about is his status as one of bluegrass music's mainstays. The release of his last two albums, 1990's *Don't Stop the Music* and *Blue Side of Town* in 1992, have firmly established him at the top of his field. His peers recognized his efforts as well, voting him Male Vocalist of the Year two years running at the International Bluegrass Music Association awards.

McCoury began his professional career in 1956, fresh out of high school, as a

banjo player. It was the legendary Bill Monroe who later switched McCoury over to guitar and began to encourage his talents as a vocalist. After playing with Monroe's Bluegrass Boys, McCoury began his solo career in the mid '60s.

Eventually, years of playing and traveling brought McCoury back to his native Pennsylvania, where he has kept the music in the family. His band, which continues to kick out his trademark botky-tonk bluegrass, now features son Rob on banjo and son Ron on mandolin.

Dan DeLuca of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* wrote "though McCoury's bluegrass is as pure as the Kentucky mountain air — no drums, no sir — it is played with such a peppery vigor that not one note sounds dated ... He sounds like a man with conviction to the bone, playing like the devil to keep ahead of the hellfire at his heels."



# TIM AND THE O'BOYS

Saturday, 12:15 to 1:30pm

Expect Tim O'Brien and the O'Boys to wow the Bluegrass Festival crowd with a show of dynamic musicianship and songwriting. He is "one of the sharpest lyricists I've ever heard," according to Mary-Chapin Carpenter, and Lyle Lovett has described O'Brien as "a consistently great singer, player and songwriter."

A former member of the bluegrass band Hot Rize, O'Brien released a solo album called *Odd Man In* that established him as an extraordinary songwriting talent. His most recent album, *Oh Boy! O'Boy!*, features O'Brien with the O'Boys, singer/guitarist Scott Nygard, and Telluride Bluegrass Academy Master bass instructor Mark Schatz.

Where O'Brien's solo album rolls along at an easygoing country pace, allowing the lyrics to hold the weight of the songs, the O'Boys album attacks with a country-funk aggression that complements themes of heartache, loneliness and failure. Steeped in blues, the songs bespeak the human condition.



On *Time To Learn*, the O'Boys are joined by Carpenter in an aching confession. In *A Perfect Place To Hide*, written with Keith Little, O'Brien examines the trials of those who drink to escape bitter reality. "Few are chosen, few ever see the light," he wails in the *Few are Chosen*.

Clearly, this is a thoughtful songwriter who has the musical talent behind him to effectively move the human spirit. Tim O'Brien and the O'Boys will bring to the stage an irresistible mix of traditional bluegrass and old-time country and blues.

# LAURIE LEWIS

by Shawn Young

Respect for tradition — Saturday, 10:45am to noon

Rounder recording artist and International Bluegrass Music Association female vocalist of the year Laurie Lewis will be showing up for Bluegrass a little early this year to teach voice and fiddle to a new generation of musicians at the Telluride Academy June 14 through 16.

Lewis is a fiddler, singer and songwriter who performs original material with a traditional sound.

"It's music with definite traditional roots that I'm very respectful of, but I'm a contemporary person," said Lewis in a recent telephone interview. She said her style "follows my heart."

Lewis' new album, *True Stories*, is due out on Rounder July 15. Of the 13 songs on the album, eight are originals. Lewis also appears on Tim O'Brien's new album *Oh Boy! O' Boy!*

Lewis and her band Grant Street have recorded *Love Chooses You* and *Grant Street String Band*. In 1989, Lewis recorded her solo album *Restless Rambling Heart* on the Flying Fish label. Lewis has contributed to many folk and bluegrass recordings since her career began in 1973.

Lewis sings in a strong, sweet, intelli-

gent voice and backs herself with her award-winning fiddling. Her band consists of Tom Rozum, Tony Furtado and Tammy Fassaert.

**'It's music with definite traditional roots that I'm very respectful of, but I'm a contemporary person.'**

The band is headquartered in Berkeley, Calif., where Lewis grew up. Her father put himself through medical school by playing flute with the Dallas Symphony. Lewis grew up playing classical violin, and made the switch to bluegrass in her late teens, when the Berkeley folk scene had much to offer a young musician.

She has toured extensively throughout her career, and this will be a repeat appearance at Bluegrass for Lewis. She said the festival is "breathtaking," and her favorite thing about it is "getting to hear everyone else."

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