

folk scare 2004

March 8, 2004

I'm just back from San Diego for the 16th International Folk Alliance event. While there I met a guy who is a singer. He also plays a guitar and mandolin. In fact I understand he is writing his own songs now as well. I should go see him play live. OK.

Several of the things I have learned there include witnessing a new BOSE amplification system for clubs and medium venues which is really a bold design. Instead of a PA and monitors these speaker cylinders stand behind the players and contain the house sound, which is what the players are now hearing. Instead of finding themselves inside a different, unbalanced monitor mix, they hear the same as the audience. Quite a bold concept, and the house part of the sound was fabulous. No speaker stacks smacking you in the side of the head with sound washes, which I find fatiguing after a while. My only concern is that they kinda remind me of a small, gray version of the 'pods' used in This Is Spinal Tap. I also learned of the importance of ISRC codes on each song, and the new digital tracking methods used for DMX and Music Choice, satellite and web broadcasting. Performance fees have not been resolved here in the US for airplay usage, as they have in England and Europe, but I think that's gonna change.

In terms of bands and artists performing at FA, I have seen a ton of solid artists of all kinds; developing, emerging and surviving. Probably more bands this year, as this is clearly a growing trend in the genre. In fact, the venerable folk venue in Boston, Club Passim, is now holding a punk/folk series, knowing that these two genres actually share many similarities. My favorites this year include Jonathan Byrd, the Waybacks, We're About Nine, Jake Armerding, Anne McCue, Darrell Scott, Ralston's Bouzouki benefit and my very favorite brand new thing, Myshkin's Ruby Warblers. I'd like to hear more from them definitely.

Loving all the fuss in the Bubba and the Love Sponges, and Howard Stern land, and now KCRW, [altho I don't think that language would fly at any time]. I do believe this new concern will be the turning point in post-Janet network broadcasting. I think the majority of the general public has reached a critical mass of violent, salacious and desperate programs and is recasting the bar. I hope. It's a perfect opportunity for all the big sedan license holders like Clear Channel, Viacom, CBS, even Fox to step away from the dumbing down and down effect and make something good out of the concept of so much power in so few hands. Karmazin and Hogan are poised to lead the way, and can look like heroes, and take responsibility for cleaning things up a bit. I'm not a prude by any means, but I think it's all gone too far. I can't believe what I hear people saying, flashing, eating, selling-out and covering up on TV and radio. Gimme a freakin' break. I also think that the new broadcast standard must apply to cable and satellite as well if it is going to have any teeth. Put the right shows on the right channels with the right dayparting. Enough already. Happy International Women's Week to all. Now refresh my memory, when is International Men's Day again?



MARK ERELLI



SUSAN WERNER



4 WAY STREET



WE'RE ABOUT NINE

ADD WEEK

- 3/8 JOHN FLYNN - 'Dragon' [MettaFour]
- 3/8 WE'RE ABOUT NINE - 'Albany' [circline]
- 3/15 PARTICLE 'Launchpad' [ORMusic]
- 3/22 MAGGI, pierce & ej 'Flame' [mpe]
- 3/29 JOE RATHBONE - 'Learning to Fly' [ZAKZ Records]

FMRL



**concatenated**  
 JOSH RITTER - 'Man Burning' continues to convert new markets each week. Sales also continue to build, and will in fact pass Joan Baez, who covered one of his songs on her concurrent album, by Easter time. Love it. He is currently in Europe with Damian Rice, and the US tour will resume the last week of March. We will also ship a new EP in early April with 'Snow Is Gone' and a couple of live tracks and new song. Please stay with us here.

MARK ERELLI - 'Pretend', the duet with Erin McKeown, continues to bring Mark to new markets as well, as we welcome Pittsburgh for the first time. The album is now Top 5 in Americana and Top 30 in the fmqb Public radio charts. Yea. The best and fastest reaction ever for Mark. If you are playing a lot on Americana, please report us to AAA as well, as we want to build there too. He records a World Cafe session this Wednesday with the band, after his visit to WFUV and Sirius.

4 WAY STREET - 'Several Thousand' had another great week of new radio support with WRNX, WEBK, WBZC, KBAC and DMX all starting this week. This is definitely breaking out of the Northeast in sales and airplay support. XM session aired last week and we are getting calls from a growing number of markets with good play. If they are coming thru town, you would love a station visit. Hearing those four voices working in such close harmony, right there in your studio-in your face-is really beautiful. 'Maze' was featured on TV, 'Joan of Arcadia' last Friday night.

WE'RE ABOUT NINE - The new album should have arrived last week. Just graduated from Towson State University with music degrees, this band is working 15 nights a month for upwards of hundreds of dollars. Please check out 'Writing Again', 'Albany' and 'Slow Sliding Funk' for starters. Very clever word play, great sense of harmony and melody and a refreshing attitude will carry them forward.

JOHN FLYNN - 'Dragon' should have also just arrived in your office. John had a Top 15 Americana record with his last studio album, and has been working relentlessly since then. Please check out 'Dragon' 'Hope Sleeps' and 'Minnie Lou' for a great sample of his new work. John loves a good election year. KTBG does too.

SUSAN WERNER - A great radio week in respect to her album 'I Can't Be New'. First live shows the cabaret to Susan, as evidenced by her live show over the years, and this is her first full record in that style. Please listen to 'No One Needs to Know', 'Much At All' and 'I Can't Be New', and note the participation of Tunes Thompson and friends. On Morning Edition on Day March 9.

MASON JENNINGS - 'lemon grove avenue' also had a great start at radio this week with WNCW, WKZE, KXCI and Maine Public Radio all finding room for his new record. He will also be touring everywhere thru-out the Spring. I know he has already built an amazing fan base from his past touring, and seems to have been embraced by the surfer community along with Jack Johnson.

PARTICLE - Should be arriving now. First studio record from this three year old touring machine. They play the overnight sets at Bonnaroo, from 4-8am. 'Launchpad' edit should be on your desk along with the album. WXPB and WERU couldn't wait, and are playing the 8 minute version. Great story in the business section of yesterday's New York Times.

Please let me know if any of this makes any sense. Playing, ADDING, developing, needing reserve, fund raising or station visits with any of the above is just a reply away.

As always, thanks for reading and playing along.

FEATURE ALBUM

**PETER MULVEY - Kitchen Radio [Signature Sounds]**  
 \*\*\*PLEASE NOTE THE USE OF THE F-BOMB IN 'SAD, SAD, SAD, SAD' AND THE USE OF GODDAMN IN 'ME & ALBERT'.\*\*\* THANK YOU.



When he is home, Peter Mulvey begins his day as many people do, with the news of the day pouring out of the radio on his kitchen counter. Where that leads him, though, is the real story here.

With Kitchen Radio, Mulvey's third album for Signature Sounds (his eighth overall and his first album of original material in four years - see Discography below), he has put the songwriting solidly front and center, and the result is a moving, deft portrait of a place where the personal and the worldwide intersect. Peter Mulvey and longtime writing partner and producer David "Goody" Goodrich set the mood with vibrant, often surprising musical ideas. Supported by an excellent band of Boston's musical veterans, Mulvey's Kitchen Radio is an album of original music performed with grit and abandon.

From this music arise lyrics with great economy, emotional resonance, and clarity. Images of travel and longing weave through the album - a longing for meaning, for love, for home, for a peaceful world, for peace of mind. Mulvey says his writing process occurs "on airport runways, late at night in bed, across the kitchen table from Goody, and wherever else it seems to want to happen," and on Kitchen Radio, as on all of his albums, from this process come songs which seem to want to happen; there's nothing forced here. "Shirt" is a love song to moments given and snatched away by time. "Sad, Sad, Sad, Sad (and Faraway from Home)" is a rollicking basher, a tour de force for the unreliable narrator. "29¢ Head" leaves us proud to make no sense of a nonsensical world. Kitchen Radio is clearly the work of an artist fully grown.

Peter Mulvey began as a self-described "city kid" from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He played, wrote, and sang in bands while studying theatre there, and then traveled to Dublin, Ireland, where he learned the trade of the street singer. Returning to the States, he spent a few years in Boston, building an audience through street and subway performing, while also immersing himself in the thriving musical community. He recorded two projects for the now-defunct Boston imprint Eastern Front, and since his 2000 release The Trouble with Poets, has made records with the venerable singer/songwriter label Signature Sounds. His previous CD, 2002's Ten Thousand Mornings, recorded back on his favorite Boston subway platform, is a set of long-loved covers by the likes of Randy Newman, Gillian Welch, Elvis Costello, Marvin Gaye, and others. Mojo described the disc as "simultaneously Mulvey's homage to his one-time training ground and a beautifully atmospheric record of gifted interpretations."

Though his home is now back in Milwaukee, Mulvey spends most of every year as a serious disciple of the road, touring relentlessly from Anchorage to Dublin and all points between. In addition to this rigorous calling, Mulvey has also written and performed music for theatre and modern dance (Sam Shepard's A Lie of the Mind, Amiri Baraka's Primitive World, and for The Wild Space Dance Company), penned articles for national magazines (Acoustic Guitar, Performing Songwriter, The Writer), and conducted numerous guitar and songwriting workshops. He has done voice-over work for various documentaries, has had songs placed in both film and television (the WB dramas Felicity and Dawson's Creek, independent films Origin of the Species and The Fisherman, the PBS documentary Wisconsin: An American Portrait), and has just wrapped production on a full-length DVD of his own, which features both interview and concert footage, to be released later this year.

Mulvey also has an insatiable appetite for collaboration, appearing on colleagues' recordings, or just stepping on stage with other artists to try something spontaneous, something unrehearsed. In 2003, he released the trio album Redbird with fellow singer/songwriters Kris Delmhurst and Jeffrey Foucault - an album of 17 songs, ranging from jazz standards to old country tunes to contemporary covers, recorded in 3 days, around one microphone.

If Mulvey's last record was a nod to where he is from, Kitchen Radio is an inspired telling of where he is going.

PLAYING LIVE



**kids with guitars**  
 Mason Jennings:  
 Mid-West  
 Including: Minneapolis, Madison, Iowa City, St. Louis

Mark Erelli:  
 Mid-Atlantic  
 Including: Vienna, West Hartford, Larchmont, NYC

Peter Mulvey:  
 Mid-Atlantic  
 Including: Saratoga Springs, Mays Landing, Cambridge

Susan Werner:  
 Mid-Atlantic  
 Including: Wilmington, New York City, Cleveland

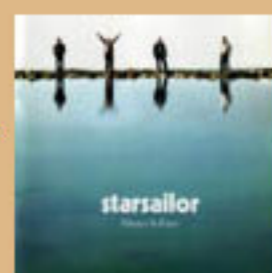
We're About 9:  
 Mid-Atlantic  
 Including: Mr. Rainer, Westfield, Baltimore

Particle:  
 West Coast  
 Including: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Denver, Vail

Josh Ritter:  
 Midwest and West Coast  
 Chicago, Minneapolis, San Francisco, Portland

RECORD OF THE WEEK

**All of Our Names**  
 It's definitely an understated, cautious record, but I really like the Sarah Harmer record alot. She has a bunch of new songs that are filled with rock melodies, especially 'Almost' and 'Dandelions in Bullet Holes' and 'Tether'. She has lots of cool horn and reed arrangements on many of these songs. I also dig the first half of the Starsailor record alot. 'Silence Is Easy' should be one of the great songs of the year. Also like 'Music Was Saved' and 'Some of Us'. Another great English band. They just keep on coming the past couple of years. And the best one is about to return, sounding like 'Message from the Country' era Move.



JOHN FLYNN



MAGGI, PIERCE & EJ



PARTICLE



MASON JENNINGS

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