

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 21 October 2011

CONTACT: Paula Silbey: (845) 679-2821; paulasilbey@aol.com

CONTACT: Jennie Litt & David Alpher: (845) 687-8949; jlitt1@hvc.rr.com

**Chamber Arts Festival of Marbletown Presents
Star-Studded Gala Fundraiser,
*60s CABARET: A Decade of Change In Song***

The highball vs. the acid tab. Freedom Riders vs. the Ku Klux Klan. The military-industrial complex vs. the Weather Underground. Campbell's Soup vs. Andy Warhol. The *New York Times* vs. *The Buddhist Third-Class Junk-Mail Oracle*. The Vegas floor show vs. the Fillmore light show. Bob Dylan and Joan Baez vs. Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gormé.

The Sixties was a decade of contradiction and seismic change, and nowhere were those contradictions more evident, or those changes better chronicled, than in the decade's popular music. In *60s Cabaret: A Decade of Change in Song*, Hudson Valley-based singers **Jennie Litt**, **Danielle Woerner**, and **Neil Herlands**, along with pianist **David Alpher**, guitarist **Matt Finck**, bassist **Scott Petito**, and drummer **Larry Balestra**, will bring that music to life again, in all its dizzying variety.

From Broadway to the Brill Building, Motown to Swinging London, Nashville to Ipanema, Golden Gate Park to the churches of Birmingham, Alabama, music was in the air—songs for teenagers, songs for businessmen, songs for soul sisters, songs for banjo-pickers, songs for drop-outs, songs for sit-ins—a soundtrack uniting a divided culture.

The Sixties was also the decade when the currency of popular music changed forever, from the song itself (performed and recorded by multiple artists) to the recording (which linked the song permanently to the recording artist). Cabaret as an art form is a relic from the era when the song, not the recording, was king. In *60s Cabaret*, you'll be surprised by fresh interpretations of familiar songs (*He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother*; *Morning Morgantown*; *Because*), as well as by songs that time (and the radio) forgot (*Sunny Goodge Street*; *Crazy Downtown*; *My Boyfriend Got A Beatle Haircut*). Lively narration by the performers puts it all in context.

60s Cabaret: A Decade of Change in Song takes place on Saturday, March 24, at 8 p.m., at Backstage Studio Productions, 323 Wall Street, Kingston. The show is a gala benefit for the **Chamber Arts Festival of Marbletown** (David Alpher, Artistic Director). In addition to the show, the event will feature a cash bar, free munchies (including a brownie smorgasbord!), and a 60s Trivia contest with Woodstock Roundtable host Doug Grunther. Dust off your grooviest 60s threads and come in costume for the chance to win a fab prize! Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door, plus a two-drink minimum. Advance tickets are available starting March 1, at www.chamberartsfestival.org, or by calling (845) 687-2687.

Backstage Studio Productions is located in Uptown Kingston. There is on-street parking and a multi-level lot within easy walking distance. In case of snow, the event will take place on Sunday, March 25, at 8 p.m.

Under the artistic direction of pianist-composer David Alpher, **The Chamber Arts Festival of Marbletown**, now in its third season, presents an annual series of intimate and imaginative concerts by distinguished classical and crossover artists and ensembles. The Festival's 2007 season will take place May 25, 26, 27, and June 1, 2, and 3, at SUNY Ulster in Stone Ridge. As part of the March 24th benefit, David will unveil the Festival's 2007 line-up.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Cabaret duo **Jennie Litt** (vocals) and **David Alpher** (piano) have appeared at numerous venues in the northeast and beyond, including the 2005 and 2006 seasons of The Chamber Arts Festival of Marbletown (with Jay Ungar & Molly Mason, and *Poets of Tin Pan Alley* author Philip Furia,

respectively), The Rockport Chamber Music Festival, Harvard University, Bard College, The Albany Institute of History & Art, The MacDowell Colony, Music at Marist, The People's Voice Café (NYC), Gloucester's West End Theatre, and St. Giles Church (Oxford, UK). Recently hailed as "among the premier cabaret acts," and a "perfect musical ensemble," Litt and Alpher have delighted audiences with cabaret shows that offer in-depth explorations of the Great American Songbook. Alpher and Litt are also songwriters: their revue *Smart-Alecky Songs for Serious Times* offers an hour of songs in the comic tradition of Tom Lehrer, with lyrics by Litt and music by Alpher.

Versatile soprano **Danielle Woerner** (vocals) has been heard from La MaMa to Lincoln Center in Manhattan, and throughout the eastern seaboard, in a large repertoire of classical and popular musics from the Renaissance to the 21st century. Her 1999 solo recording, *She Walks in Beauty*, for Parnassus records, earned international kudos, and she recently celebrated the release of a new CD on Albany Records, *Voices of the Valley*, with music and performances by Hudson Valley composers. Locally, she's been a featured soloist with the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, Woodstock Chamber Orchestra, Ars Choralis, the Pone Ensemble, and on series including the Maverick and Grand Montgomery. She directs the choral ensemble Voices for Peace, and teaches at Vassar College, Dutchess Community College, and privately. She was the Fall, 2000, Artist in Residence at SUNY Ulster.

Neil Herlands (vocals) worked extensively in regional and summer stock in the 80's. In the 90's he began a career in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis and is currently in private practice in Manhattan. Neil performs regularly with Manhattan-based band The Bridge, which also features singer/songwriter Mark Houghtaling, and vocalist Pam Brennan.

Matthew Finck (guitar), a native of the Hudson Valley, moved to NYC in 1993 to complete his BFA at Long Island University's Brooklyn campus. After freelancing around town and making a name for himself in the uptown Harlem organ trio scene, he moved back to the Hudson Valley. Since then he has been leading his trio and quartet around the tri-state area, freelancing, and teaching privately. Some members of his groups have included Adam Nussbaum, Jay Anderson, Ira Coleman, and Roswell Rudd.

Scott Petito (bass) is a multi-talented musician and arranger who plays bass, guitar, mandolin and keyboards. He is also the award-winning producer and owner of NRS Recording Studios/Scott Petito Productions, in Catskill, NY. As a producer, Scott's recordings have earned him Grammy nominations, Top 40 singles, European gold records, and frequent placement on radio charts. As a bass player, his credits include The Band, Keith Richards, Allen Ginsberg, Bela Fleck, Mark Knopfler, Tony Levin, Jerry Marotta, Happy and Artie Traum, Jean Redpath, John Sebastian, Dave Brubeck, Tom Paxton, Stevie Wonder, Taylor siblings James, Livingston, and Kate, and others. Scott is also the bass player for the legendary 60's punk-political band, The Fugs. With singer Leslie Ritter, he recorded *In The Silence* and *Circles In Sand*, which have received international airplay and rave reviews. The duo are currently at work on their third recording.

Larry Balestra (drums) is originally from Syracuse, NY. He has performed with the Ice Capades Orchestra, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, the Woodstock Chamber Orchestra, Don Rickles, and members of the National Symphony in Washington. He has been fortunate to have worked with a number of local jazz artists, including The Saints of Swing with Miss René Bailey, as well as singer/songwriters Dorraine Scofield and Kurt Henry. He performs regularly throughout the tri-state area, and his discography includes *From the Shore* (Rick Balestra) and *When She Dances*, featuring the music of Brendan Van Epps.

—end—