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Fall Musical Guests, Authors and Sinatra Idol Contest Turn Up Volume for “Hoboken Tunes: Our Musical Heritage”

Hoboken, NJ – Oct. 18, 2007 – With an exhibit highlighting music’s role in the fabric of Hoboken’s history, what better way to bring it to life than with concerts? Through the hard work of Hoboken Historical Museum Director Robert Foster and Hoboken Cultural Affairs coordinator Geri Fallo, the Museum is pleased to invite the community to a series of concerts and talks at the Museum this fall.

Following is a list of concerts and other events that have been scheduled from November through December. All events are open to the public; many are free of charge for members. For more information, visit www.hobokenmuseum.org, or call 201-656-2240. The Museum is open six days a week at 1301 Hudson St., in the Shipyard building, the oldest structure still standing on Hoboken’s storied waterfront.

The Cucumbers: Songs and Stories

The Museum will host an acoustic reunion show of an icon of Hoboken’s early ’80s indie music scene: **The Cucumbers, on Saturday, November 3, at 8 p.m.** Founding members Jon Fried and Deena Shoshkes moved to Hoboken in 1981 and played their first show as The Cucumbers at Maxwell’s in early 1982. Following in the footsteps of The Bongos and The Individuals, they helped popularize the “Hoboken Sound” with videos on MTV, national tours, articles in *People*, *Rolling Stone* and *The New York Times*.

Jon and Deena will play acoustic versions of their songs, many about life in Hoboken, interspersed with stories about the River City Fair, Music Among Friends, and now-defunct clubs such as Court Street and The Beaten Path. They will also play songs from *Over the Moon*, the kids’ rock band Deena formed with Alice Genese when they both were new mothers and became friends in the playground at Church Square Park.

Current musical projects include *Songs of the Spectrum*, an album featuring Jackson Browne, Valerie Carter, Marshall Crenshaw and Dar Williams, who joined forces to raise awareness for autism research, and an upcoming solo album from Deena.

Stephen Foster, America's First Great Songwriter

The first great American songwriter, Stephen Foster, will get his due on Sunday, **November 4 at 4 p.m.** Ken Emerson, author of the book *Doo-Dah: Stephen Foster and the Rise of American Popular Culture*, will talk about the prolific popular music composer and his significance as the first home-grown songwriter. Foster lived in Hoboken in 1855 when he wrote the classic "I Dream of Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair." Foster's brief career (he died at age 37), chronicled the zeitgeist of an era of dizzying invention and economic growth. According to the book's publisher, "It was an era of industrialization; of steamboats, railroads and the telegraph; of westward expansion and the California gold rush; and of course, of slavery and the Civil War. Foster absorbed it all, and all of it infused his music." Admission is \$5, free for Museum members.

1980s Songwriters' Showcase: kitchenTablemusic

What do the following musicians have in common: the Waitresses' Chris Butler, national critics' darling Freedy Johnston, and Hoboken's tex-mexabilly rocker Gene D. Plumber? All honed their diverse songwriting and performing styles in the "kitchenTablemusic" showcase for Hoboken singer-songwriters in the late '80s/early '90s. Regular performers also included Kate Jacobs, the Marys, Frank Bango, John Sonntag and Greg Cagno. Many of these will be attending a **kitchenTablemusic reunion** at the Museum on **Saturday, November 10, 7:30 p.m.**, led by local musician and host of the Arts and Music Festival's Sixth St. stage, Tom Vincent. Admission is \$5, free for Museum members.

Long-time Hoboken music fans may recall the loose collective of singer-songwriters who simultaneously entertained and learned stagecraft by competing for a slot in the weekly "kitchenTablemusic" series, first held in 1989 – 1990 at the bar Live Tonight. The series resumed almost seven years later at the same club, which operated under a new name, Zell's, every Wednesday night from February 1997 to February 1998.

Vincent insisted that all musicians audition for the show before the 7 p.m. start. He enforced a creed that ensured the series would not disappoint the audience: "Audiences need entertainment. Musicians are entertainers. Democracy is not entertaining. There is no place for fair play on stage." He says it gave many performers their first exposure to audiences and stage experience, and the veterans would share tips and advice with the newbies.

The Men Behind Maxwell's Magic

What is the secret to **Maxwell's** longevity as a nightclub, and how has it managed to continue to draw music fans from all over the state and across the river since the late 1970s? Find out from the two men who made Maxwell's cool long before Brooklyn by booking the rising stars of the indie music scene. On **Saturday, November 17, at 4 p.m.**, join founder **Steve Fallon** and longtime and current musical programmer **Todd Abramson** at the Museum for a talk about Maxwell's highlights throughout its nearly three decades. Admission is \$5, free for Museum members.

From Slave to Stage Star: "Blind Tom" Wiggins

On **Saturday, December 1, at 4 p.m.**, the Hoboken Historical Museum welcomes scholar and musician John Davis back to Hoboken for a talk and to play recordings of the music of the 1850s pianist and music savant "Blind Tom" Wiggins, who retired here at the end of his career. Admission is \$5, free for Museum members.

Start Spreadin' the News...Sinatra Idol Contest

What better tribute to the Chairman of the Board on his birthday than a contest to see who's got the pipes and the swing to be the next Sinatra? On **Wednesday, December 12, at 7 p.m.**, join fellow Sinatra fans as a contestant or audience member at the Hoboken Historical Museum for the "**Sinatra Idol**" contest.

The event will be emceed by Gary Troy Simpson, aka Rev. SimpSinatra, that tamer of tunes. A native of Paterson, N.J., Simpson is a multimedia artist who created the P.T. PuppetShow, founded the Unfunctional Furniture Company LLC, and is a member of the Frozen Monkey Band, house band of the Frozen Monkey Cafe. He's been a friend of Hoboken since starting the Exhibit October multimedia art shows with Louie Zhelesnik back in the early '90s.

Would-be contestants should send a demo tape or CD to the Museum. Finalists will be chosen by a panel of local celebrity judges organized by Geri Fallo, coordinator of the Hoboken Cultural Affairs Division. Admission is \$5, free for Museum members.

Drums Along the Hudson: Hoboken's '80s Pop Music Scene

On **Saturday, December 15, at 7 p.m.**, **The Bongos' Richard Barone** visits the Hoboken Historical Museum for a discussion of the origins of the Hoboken Pop Scene, circa 1980, with **Rob Norris**. The pair will share music, stories and videos of the "American Liverpool" that emerged on the waterfront. Barone is an acclaimed recording artist, performer, composer, and producer. Since his days as frontman of The Bongos, he has produced countless studio recordings, and collaborated with world-class artists in every musical genre. As musical and theatrical director, he has scored shows and staged all-star concert events at such venues as Carnegie Hall and the Hollywood Bowl.

Barone lives in New York City, where he is currently recording his fifth solo album. His debut book, *Frontman: Surviving the Rock Star Myth*, has just been released by Backbeat/Hal Leonard Books in September. Barone will also sign copies of his new book. Admission is \$5, free for Museum members.

About the Hoboken Historical Museum

Founded 1986, the Museum's mission is to educate the public about Hoboken's history, diverse culture, architecture and historic landmarks. In 2001, the Museum moved into one of the oldest buildings on the waterfront, in the former Bethlehem Steel shipyard, at 1301 Hudson St., Hoboken, where it maintains a series of rotating exhibits. The Museum is open six days a week, 2 – 9 pm on Tues. – Thurs., 1 – 5 pm on Fridays, and noon – 5 pm on weekends. It offers special exhibits, tours, events and lectures, as well as educational programs for adults and children on a weekly basis. An updated schedule of events and an online catalog of many items in its collections are available at www.hobokenmuseum.org. The Museum is a not-for-profit tax-exempt 501(c) entity.

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Note to editors: Photos available upon request for most events.