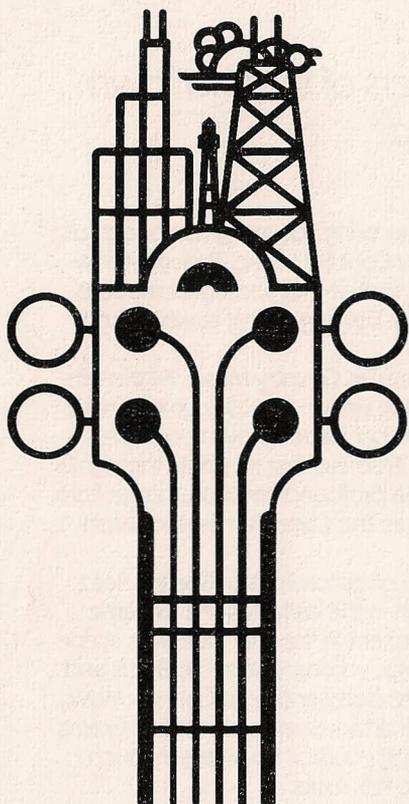


6TH ANNUAL
**CITY OF CHICAGO/WFMT
FOLK CONCERT**
AT TASTE OF CHICAGO

MONDAY, JULY 2

6-8:30 PM

PETRILLO MUSIC SHELL · GRANT PARK



FREE ADMISSION

98.7
WFMT
CHICAGO'S FINE ARTS STATION

PRESENTED DURING TASTE OF CHICAGO BY WFMT
AND THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF SPECIAL EVENTS,
CITY OF CHICAGO, RICHARD M. DALEY, MAYOR

City of Chicago/WFMT Folk Concert

EMCEES: Ray Nordstrand & Rich Warren

- 6:00 Fiddle Puppets
- 6:15 Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver
- 6:45 Fiddle Puppets
- 7:00 John Gorka
- 7:30 Emmylou Harris
- 8:25 Finale – staff members of the Old Town
School of Folk Music

The City of Chicago and WFMT Radio are excited to bring you tonight's concert of some of the finest traditional artists in contemporary Country Music. Though it may seem contradictory to use these terms together, the truth is that traditional music is very abundant in today's music scene. It's like an ever-flowing spring at which contemporary music periodically refreshes itself.

1975 brought the first stirrings of a new traditionalism in Country Music. At the vanguard of this emerging reverence for roots was a young singer who took time to mine the gold in Nashville's nearly forgotten heritage while her better-known contemporaries were rushing to cross over to pop stardom. From her first hit single through 15 albums, Emmylou Harris proved it possible to draw a profound emotional edge from old chestnuts recorded first by such country giants as The Carter Family and Ralph Stanley, Johnny Cash and Don Gibson.

The truth is, Emmylou Harris cut her musical teeth on recordings of Seeger, Baez, Collins, and other so-called "urban" folksingers. Then in the early 70s she became even more exposed to roots music with her involvement in the vital Bluegrass scene in Washington D.C. There she met Gram Parsons, a tragic visionary from The Byrds and the Flying Burrito Brothers; and was "plunged over the deep end" into Country Music. Since her mentor's death, Emmylou has done more than anyone else to realize Gram's vision of a "cosmic American music" that would bring youthful Rock fans in touch with down-to-earth Country Music and its authentic folk roots.

Doyle Lawson, the founder and front man of Quicksilver, was also a part of the D.C. scene in the early 70s. Raised in east Tennessee in the heartland of Country Music's most traditional idiom, Bluegrass, he wanted to grow up to play the mandolin like Bill Monroe, the 'Father' of Bluegrass. He started his professional career while still in his teens, and by the early 70s was in D.C. as a member of those urban Bluegrass stalwarts, the Country Gentlemen.

By founding Quicksilver in 1979, Doyle committed himself to carrying the home-grown values of Bluegrass on into a musical era typified by technological complexity and mass-mediated posturing. 35 years earlier, the first generation of Bluegrass

masters had forged an amalgam that rescued the fiddle and banjo, and traditional ballads and folk songs as well, from the music industry's scrapheap. Yet Bluegrass has always been more than a review of the past. It is acoustic string band music shifted into overdrive; ancient, plaintive melodies boiling with the urgency of a Blues riff or reinvigorated by improvisatory genius.

At the forefront of Bluegrass's second generation, Quicksilver continues to stretch, but not break, the boundaries of tradition. Yet the foundation of their sound is a reemphasis on carefully phrased, high-flying vocal harmonies. Their reverence for tradition is most evident in the work they have done to restore Gospel Music to its rightful prominence in the Bluegrass repertoire. Not only do they recall the importance of the Gospel quartette sound to the early bands, their approach also draws deeply from the rich *a capella* Black Gospel tradition.

African-American music has always exercised a leavening effect on all varieties of American music, including Country and other folk-influenced idioms. That effect is also present in American folk dance traditions as well. The Fiddle Puppets, the folk revival's premier step-dancing ensemble, emerged from the aftermath of the frenzy for Appalachian clogging that swept the country around the Bicentennial. Founder Eileen Carson has been a member of the Green Grass Cloggers, a group of North Carolina college students who learned flat-footing and buck dancing steps from old-timers back home. After more than a decade, the Fiddle Puppets are still true to the traditional steps they first learned, but have also adopted and adapted other styles of step-dancing, most notably the urban but earthy steps of African-American "hoofers." They have tapped for yet another audience a hidden, but vital tradition that survives independently of its slicker, but better-known offspring, tap-dancing.

Singer-songwriter John Gorka rounds out this summer celebration of the durability and malleability of traditional American music. Gorka has built his songwriting skills with the care and patience of an artisan, putting himself through an extended apprenticeship to refine his songs. Only when, as he says, "I started to think that maybe the songs were good enough that people who didn't know me would like them," did he go public, beginning what has become one of the hottest new careers in contemporary folk music.

By the time Gorka began his professional career in the early '80s, his songs were already the talk of the folk circuit. At small clubs all over the country, his name was mentioned by performers passing through. The buzz was always pretty much the same: "Have you heard this guy, this Gorka, from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania? He hangs out at the coffeehouse there all the time, but he's so quiet, nobody knew he wrote songs. But they're amazing songs; so simple, yet not like anybody else's."

*Notes by Paul Tyler, Museum Curator
The Old Town School of Folk Music*

Acknowledgements

WFMT gratefully acknowledges the cooperation and support of the following individuals in producing tonight's concert:

Kathy Osterman, Helen Doria, Richard Johnson and the entire staff of the Mayor's Office of Special Events, Richard M. Daley, Mayor.

Jim Hirsch and the staff of Old Town School of Folk Music, Artistic Consultants.

Jim Fleming and the staff of Fleming, Tamulevich and Associates, artist representatives.

Ron Stern and staff, production management.

WFMT's Sandra Myers, artist & crew hospitality.

Lillian and the Petrillo Music Shell staff.

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JULY 3RD—8 PM

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Michael Morgan conducts the Grant Park Symphony in a program of Gershwin favorites plus Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture" and a spectacular fireworks display to Sousa marches.

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