



The Hen & The Crow to Perform Concert Sept 26th

INTERVIEW BY DORI SMITH

The Hen & the Crow are an Appalachian Gothic and folk-country duo composed of husband and wife Wesley (he/him) and Caroline (she/her) Crow. Crafting songs that feel both timeless and urgently modern, they explore themes like family farms, deconstruction, and land preservation while embodying the quilt of Southern Ohio and Appalachia. See Hen and the Crow at 8 p.m. September 26 at the Columbus Mennonite Church at 35 Oakland Park Avenue as part of the Americana/Folk Concert Series. You can hear their single "Cardinal Power Plant" on Spotify and follow their journey on Instagram at @thehenandthecrow and @spacecanoe_rec. Their music is also featured on the Space Canoe Records website www.spacecanoerecords.com/ and YouTube channel www.youtube.com/@spacecanoerecords.

Dori Smith: In an article in the December newsletter, you talked about an album you're making. Could you please talk about how the recording is coming along and whether you've finished it?

Hen and the Crow: Recording projects are always up in the air. We went to a songwriting retreat earlier in the spring

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*"I'd like to call back summertime, and
Have her stay for just another month or so"*

"Urge for Going" - Joni Mitchell

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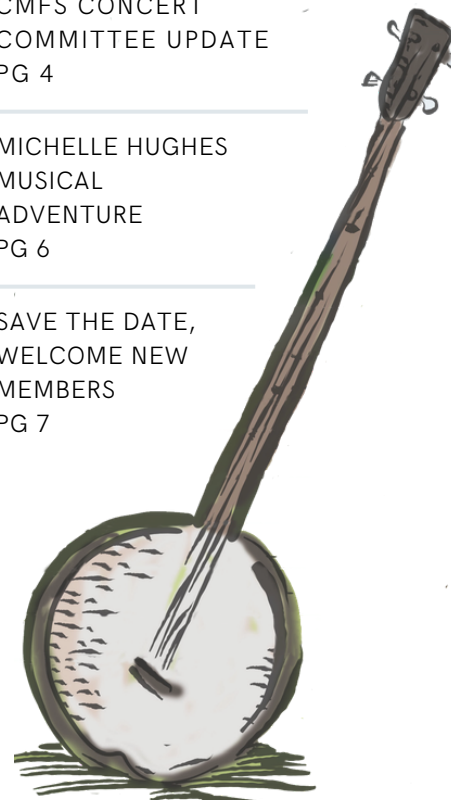




Photo Credit Michael Furmanr

hosted by Over the Rhine and reworked some of our songs. We also have been working with some different collaborators and our sound has developed because of that. We are planning to re-record a couple of tracks in October, but there are a bunch of tunes we were happy with that are completely finished! We also are hoping to do a few side projects or maybe demo releases surrounding the album.

Smith: Also to do with the recording, have you collaborated with other vocalists or instrumentalists?

H&tC: Yes! We are always collaborating with as many folks as we can. Moe Reen has lent their voice to a few of our songs. We recently started playing folk music with Molly Roisin, an amazing Irish fiddle player and rebel folksinger. They have helped us develop some really solid fiddle parts and three part harmonies within our original music. One large piece of collaboration for us is in the genre of the music. Some of our songs draw from gospel music and Appalachian church choirs, so we are trying to get as many of the Space Canoe Records folks to sing with us!

Smith: Do you have a title for the album yet, and when it might be released?

H&tC: Coming up with a title might be the hardest part for us. We've been tossing around title tracks, a self titled first album, or a lyric. We are happy to take some suggestions too! As far as the release, we had intended for it to be this fall, but as previously mentioned, we are re-recording a few tracks. Recording projects can be like that, and we want these tracks to be representative of our writing and influences.

Smith: You performed at the Central Ohio Folk Festival. Could you talk a little about your experience?

H&tC: This was such a fun experience! We've been attending the festival for years, and it was our first time performing. To receive such a good crowd response to our original music was so fulfilling. We also led a songwriting workshop, which we'd love to do again. Wesley ran into another guitar player with whom we play oldies music and got invited to play in an onstage jam next year. Something to look forward to!



Photo Credit Nina Carina

Smith: Did you play in any of the jam tents or with other artists? What was your experience at the new venue?

H&tC: Wesley jammed a bit, and we both have sat in in the sessions at previous festivals. I (Caroline) am more into singing and absorbing the music, while Wesley loves to improvise. The new venue was awesome! I loved the park and the layout!

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Smith: The harmonies in Cardinal Power Plant and Bike with a Bell are tight and expressive. When you collaborate with others, like you did in Cardinal Power Plant, do you have a version you'll sing with the collaborator and a different version you'll sing with different harmony when your collaborator isn't there?

H&tC: Thank you for saying that. Harmony is incredibly important to us. Wesley and I have been singing together for about 14 years or more in choir, and we like to say we've developed blood harmonies from singing together for so long. We are lucky to know a lot of really talented vocalists who have also had choral experience and can find a spot in our songs easily. This is actually a big reason why we brought Molly into the band! They are an amazing fiddle player, but they also add a beautiful layer of harmony when we can't call up Moe Reen or

other collaborators.

Smith: You've now performed at a few shows in the Columbus area. Do you have many concerts lined up for the coming months? Do you have any concerts you're looking forward to? Are you doing any concerts with a group of collaborators?

H&tC: We have a pretty busy fall lined up! Aside from this CFMS showcase, we will be playing with the Space Canoe band (more to come!) for a few events in October, and we just booked a November show with a fellow Appalachian folksinger, Becks! out of WV. That will be at Sweet Harmony in Canal Winchester, which is a super cute and cozy space. We are going to see the Indigo Girls, Kacey Musgraves, and Willie Nelson this fall and we will definitely be checking out some local shows too.

Concert Committee Update: An inside look at the work of CFMS' Concert Committee

BY TERRY SHARKEY

It seems like it was just yesterday that we were celebrating the birthday of board member Marian Harris at a Reeb Center concert. However, that was back in 2025 and we're already more than halfway through 2026!

Marian has been most influential in the relationship between CFMS and Reeb. This past year she continued that connection in her planning with Bailey Phillips who had taken over as Program Manager at the Reeb Center. In the summer of 2025 we were admittedly heavy on bluegrass. For

2026 Bailey suggested less bluegrassy and more bluesy (or even jazzy). Could we keep the spirit of our Americana / Folk series but also give what the South Side was asking for? Of course!

To brainstorm I checked in with Scott Woods of the Streetlight Guild. Besides being an award-winning poet and author, his organization curates cultural and artistic events in Columbus – music included. He had great suggestions and luckily two of them were available.

Starlit Ways led off our summer at Reeb Center. This Columbus-based acoustic duo was a treat! I had been exposed to them on WOSU's Broad & High program and had seen them live at the Scioto Mile Concert Series. Rose Nkechi is a talented multilingual vocalist who was wonderfully backed by Chris Glover's fingerstyle guitar and they turned out to be a fun match for us.

Concert committee member Lewis Tracy was on hand to hear Starlit Ways and noticed that our audience felt far away from their intimate music. He made a great suggestion – place the performers down off the stage and right among the seated attendees. That's exactly what we tried for the next show featuring Micah Kesselring and it worked great. Micah brought his brand of solo Appalachian blues. Check out CMFS on TikTok (@columbusfolkies). You'll see and hear Micah's deft slide work on resonator guitar.

August brought us in touch with another great local duo. Bridges to Wonderland is the pairing of Paisha Thomas and Chris Shaw. Both of these talented performers keep busy in their own right and combined they are truly a special partnership. Paisha was suggested to us not only by Scott at Streetlight, but our longtime members Jane VanAuken and Linda McDonald.

Paisha truly brought a charged, soulful vocal performance. Her heart is in a wonderful place too as she used her voice to shine a light on social workers - many of whom are working directly within organizations at the Reeb Center. Chris matched her energy likewise. When a string on his fiddle broke, he didn't miss a note while playing on the remaining three strings! My favorite moment of their performance? Paisha and Chris performed a mash-up of Prince's "Delirious" and the traditional spiritual "Down by the Riverside". I never would have guessed that was coming and loved it!

There were other great moments at Reeb that day. Bill Cohen led us again in song. It was a joy hearing everyone sing along to "This Little Light of Mine". We welcomed back CFMS Kirby Scholarship winner Simone Edwards to our open mic segment where she treated us to her original songs. Tune in to this space next month for information on our upcoming calendar of concerts!

Folk, Trad, Electronica, or All Three? A Year of Exploring Glasgow's Music Scene, Pt. 1

BY MICHELLE HUGHES

[Editor's note: Michelle has been a writer and Concert Series interviewer for the CFMS newsletter, but now is reporting on her own musical adventure across the pond!]

In July 2025, after roughly 2 whole days of deliberation, I decided I was moving to Scotland. As a student of Scottish Gaelic language and song, this didn't seem to be a very surprising decision to me; however, my friends and family were of a distinctly different opinion. Regardless, I packed a suitcase and made my way to Glasgow.

While it took me virtually no time at all to settle in and decide that I must find a way to live in Scotland for the rest of my life, thanks to a vibrant Urban Gael community in Glasgow and a mind-blowingly marvelous week on the Isle of Mull, it took me much longer to acclimate to the sight of University of Glasgow students walking around with cowboy hats and boots on their way to a local show featuring Scottish bands playing country music. You'll have to pardon my surprise, as I personally am not a fan of country music, and thus, I found this quite baffling.

Perhaps I wouldn't have been so caught off guard if I had realized that I was moving to a city that was named the first-ever UNESCO City of Music in 2008. Posters advertising all forms of popular music and artists papered many a cafe's notice boards and bathroom walls, and hardly a day would pass without me receiving emails from various lists I had joined telling me of ten-to-twenty different gigs of interest. How was a girl to choose?

Well, choose I did, though with great difficulty. First up was "Gaelic Ragas", an evening of music hosted by Sa Re Ga Scotland at the Royal Concert Hall, featuring Kumaresh (The Fiddling Monk) on violin, the Graham MacKenzie Band, and Shahbaz Hussain on tabla. The primary conceit of the performance was that Kumaresh and Shahbaz Hussain would perform a set together, followed by the Graham MacKenzie Band, and then the two acts would come together for an improvised set blending traditional Indian music with traditional Scottish music. As someone who had lived in India for a couple of years, had had an Indian husband, and who was now living in Scotland to pursue both the music and language that feels like home to her, I had never felt more understood than I did when I experienced the magical blend of sounds both intensely familiar and beloved, yet also somehow made new by their coming together. Yes, I cried during the concert.

Scottish Gaelic is an endangered language. While there are many in the language community trying their darndest to keep it alive and to see it thriving as it had been hundreds of years ago in its heyday, this situation results in a constant push-and-pull between feeling the need to hold closely to the music that is informed by the language and preserve it to the greatest extent possible and the need to appeal to young Gaelic speakers.

Demonstrating this dichotomy perfectly are Ruairidh Gray and Limonead.

Ask someone about Ruairidh Gray and they'll tell you one of two things: he reminds people of their grandpa, both in fashion sense and in sound, or he reminds them of Ol' Blue Eyes in terms of swagger and charisma. It should be noted that Gray is only 23 years old at the time of this writing. Gray has won top honors for traditional Gaelic song at the prestigious Royal National Mod in Scotland, as well as Gaelic Singer of the Year at the Scots Trad Music Awards, and is extremely popular with people of all ages, unironically.

Limonead, on the other hand, is a 20-year old school assistant who garnered a significant amount of attention across Scotland for her Gaelic rap single "Nach Buidhe Dhut", meaning "Aren't You Lucky". She wrote this song and recorded a video for it as an entry in the annual Gaelic short film competition FilmG - and took home the big FilmG Choice Award this year. While this is the only song she has released so far, the overwhelmingly positive response to it demonstrates that there is a massive appetite for youthful, energetic, and modern Gaelic language music.

Gaeltronica - there is a part of me that cringes at this word, so desperate to emphasize that the word "Gael" is not synonymous with "old-fashioned". To combine this word that denotes an identity with one that often represents a kind of soulless music (electronica) to those who prefer folk and traditional styles feels too on-the-nose. Look! Gaels and Gaeldom is not just for the dead and elderly; the youth will love traditional songs if you put them over a house beat!

To be clear, the combining of traditional and modern music modalities doesn't only happen in Scotland, of course. As a part of Edinburgh Tradfest this year, I had the opportunity to see Ukrainian artist GANNA, who blends traditional Ukrainian music with electronic music and jazz. It was a sold out show and absolutely every single person in that audience was spellbound.

I must confess, though, that I believe the Gaeltronica movement is dying off a bit, for better or for worse. And I'm not that sad to see it go; afterall, it has always felt a bit dated to me, the music somehow ageing the songs more than the lyrics of poems from the 1600s layered over top. But what next? If Limonead doesn't make the most of the magic of this moment and release another rap track in Gaelic, what combination of tradition, language, and sound will come along next to capture the imagination of the Scottish public?

Well, there is always death metal. In fact, Gun Ghaol is already leading the charge.

Michelle Hughes is a student of Scottish Gaelic language and song, and splits her time between Columbus, OH and Glasgow, Scotland. Her podcast Michelle Learns Gaelic can be found wherever you get your podcasts. If you enjoyed this piece and would like to help support her Scottish adventures, please consider a small donation towards her Gaelic Immersion Year at Glasgow University via [GoFundMe](#).



Welcome NEW Members

Vince McGuire

...and Welcome Back RENEWING Members!



Save the Date!

Americana/Folk Concert Series

Sat, Sep 26th - The Hen & The Crow

6pm open jam / 7pm Open Mic (presign-up) / 8pm Hen and the Crow Refreshments available. \$15 door

donation / \$10 CFMS members

Venue: Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Oakland Park Ave, Columbus

Conucopia (CBus Jammers/The Magpie Consort collaboration)

Sun, Sept. 27, 3 pm, Hilliard Library, 4500 Hickory Chase Way, Hilliard OH 43026. Free admission.

In-Person Jams

Mondays, 6 - 8pm - various locations during summer - contact Cbusjammers@gmail.com for location

Fridays, 2:30 - 4:30pm - Gillie Senior Center, 2100 Morse Rd. Registration starts Sept 8. First Jam is on Friday, Sept 18.

Saturdays (Sept. 8 registration):

9:30 - 11:30am - Whetstone Community Center, 3923 N. High St. First Jam Class is on Sept. 26

9:30 am - noon - Worthington Village Green SouthEast side jam happens during the farmers' market. May need a chair.

2:00 - 4:00pm - Carriage Place Community Center 4900 Sawmill Rd. First Jam Class is Sept. 19.

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Please check the in-person jam Calendar available on the CFMS website, Outreach page.

Questions? contact Cbusjammers@gmail.com

Labor Day Concert

Folksongs Help Bring Meaning Back to Labor Day

The original true meaning of Labor Day -- honoring America's workers -- will be revived this year, as 3 longtime CFMS members sing the praises -- literally -- of all those who make our lives richer by doing their everyday jobs: farmers, truckers, factory workers, teachers, doctors, white collar workers, miners, and more.

Bill Cohen, Phil Hart, and Teresa Schleifer will host this 4th annual labor-themed concert, featuring meaningful songs made famous by a wide variety of folks: Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Bruce Springsteen, Sam Cooke, James Taylor, and others. There will be other highlights too. We'll recall how, decades ago, labor unions won historic reforms that many of us take for granted today -- the 8-hour workday, improved workplace safety, the minimum wage, and an end to child labor. Plus, we'll hear stories, quips, and wise sayings about the dignity of work.

WHEN: Sunday September 6th 4 pm – 5:30 pm

WHERE: Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Oakland Park Avenue, Columbus 43214.

\$20 per person donations are suggested at the door, but all contributions, big and small, will be welcome. The musicians and sound crew will split the proceeds with The Central Ohio Workers Center, a non-profit group that helps immigrant and low-income workers. Questions? Call Bill Cohen at (614) 263-3851



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Name(s) / Band Name (if applic) _____

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General Age Range – Born: ☐ 1930s-40s ☐ 1950s-60s ☐ 1970s-80s ☐ 1990s-2010s

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We are also a growing, vibrant community of volunteers; the awesome force behind our work! Please ✓ at least 1 box.

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OR click here: <https://tinyurl.com/CFMS-Join>

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