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Smarty-pants Americana

By Hanan Daqqa / Fairfax County Times Apr 26, 2018 Updated 14 hrs ago



Singer/songwriter Chris Anderson: “Our band is loosey-goosey, smarty-pants and fun. We want people who come to our shows to loosen-up and have a great and fun experience.”

PHOTO BY STEVE PENDLEBURY MEDIA SERVICES

Some people want songs that distract them from reality, others want songs that help them face it. “Harried Americans Roadshow” wants to do both.

“When we perform as just musicians, doing ‘just’ music, that is the Harried Americans band. ‘Harried Americans Roadshow’ includes our band ‘plus’ a comedian, a poet and a special musical guest. The ‘Harried Americans Roadshow’s’ comedian and poet are different every month,” said the founder, singer/songwriter Chris Anderson. How does she describe the theme of their show? “I guess our overall theme really is smarty-pants Americana. We ‘love’ to have fun at the expense of our national politicians! When we started doing the Roadshows, each show had a different theme. But over time as the show evolved, we stopped doing the entire show on one topic... unless there is an obvious cultural tie-in like July 4th or Mother's Day. Our guests each bring their own unique performance style and can perform whatever they choose. If I had to pick a theme for 2018 so far, I guess it would be ‘Assorted Americans.’ We've had the Hawaiian artists The Aloha Boys and pianist Bill Starks who has a very Delta style. All of our guests play Americana music, but some have musical roots in other countries -- so far this year we've had guests with roots in Brazil, Argentina and Ireland,” said the founder, Anderson who is bringing the show to Cafe Montmartre in Reston, on April 27.

The Harried American band, which is one part of the Roadshow, usually performs topical songs. “I have written songs that we perform on gerrymandering, the environment, health care, inept leadership, the state of Virginia and women's issues ... that is all I can think of right now. We also perform cover songs that we like. Many are familiar Baby Boomer era pop/rock songs that turn into sing-alongs... which we encourage and love,” said Anderson.

Anderson began playing guitar and harmonica in Northern Virginia clubs in the 80s, making the switch to church bands during the 90s. In 2003, she won a “GRAMMY in the Streets” award from the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (NARAS) and Broadcast Music International (BMI) for a demo of her song “Their Leader” from her Christian Christmas project “WAI T – it’s a Musical!”

On April 27, the Roadshow will include a special guest: Argentinian guitarist/composer, Cristian Perez. “We chose Cristian Perez because he is an amazing local talent! We love to shine the spotlight on people from this area that we think our audience will like. And there is SO much talent in the D.C. area ... we invite people that we think are talented, professional and a good match for the show.

Our band is loosey-goosey, smarty-pants and fun. We want people who come to our shows to loosen-up and have a great and fun experience. So we pick artists that aren't like us musically, but would still appeal to our audience.”

Cristian has performed with many of the best musicians in the Washington D.C. area and played at numerous venues in the metropolitan area, such as Blues Alley, Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, Bohemian Caverns, Bethesda Blues & Jazz Supper Club and Twins Jazz. The Roadshow also features comedian Patty Bailey and poet Rod Deacey.

"We are a local D.C. area band just doing what we like. We usually have a full room ... but of course, we would love for more people to know about us, and to be more popular and well-known! One of the most fun things that has happened to me personally is that my daughter came to one of our shows in Maryland and posted a picture of us on her Facebook page. And one of her friends said, "That's your mom? I love that band!" That made me feel great - and I think it shocked my daughter!

"Harried Americans Roadshow"

Cafe Montmartre

1625 Washington Plaza N., Reston

7-9 p.m., Fri. April 27

Tickets: \$10

For more information, visit <http://harriedamericans.com>