



STANDING ROOM ONLY

« Heroin UK, When Dinosaurs Ruled The Earth, The Jonah Veil, The Sudden Infant Death Syndromes, Xeper and Alameda at The Sidebar Tavern, located at 218 E. Lexington St., Baltimore; 8 p.m.; for more information call 410-659-4130.

LISTENING POSTS

Barry Gurley

Explorer's Lounge, Intercontinental Harbor Court Hotel, 550 Light St., Baltimore; 7 p.m.; 410-234-0550

Name That Tune presents Holy Frijoles vs. Rocket To Venus

The Ottobar, 2549 N. Howard St., Baltimore; 9 p.m.; 410-662-0069

The Wood Brothers with Jordan Page

Rams Head Tavern, 33 West St., Annapolis; 8 p.m.; \$21; 410-268-4545

Five Bands for Five Bucks

The 8x10, 10 E. Cross St., Baltimore; 7 p.m.; \$5; 410-625-2000

P.J. Ellis and Steve LaRocca Mojo Jam

Cat's Eye Pub, 1730 Thames St., Baltimore; 9:30 p.m.; Free; 410-276-9866

Open Mic Tuesday

New Haven Lounge, 1552 Havenwood Road, Baltimore; 7 p.m.; free; 410-366-7416

DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT

SWING DANCING

» Charm City Swing Dancing — 7:30 p.m.
Austin Grill, 2400 Boston St., Baltimore; for drop-in lessons, with open dancing until 11 p.m.; lesson \$10, open dance \$5; 410-534-0606

EXHIBIT

» American Paintings by Robert Knudsen and Barbara Gruber — 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sheppard Art Gallery, 8173 Main St., Ellicott City; free; 410-461-1616

FILM

» The Mikvah Project — Noon to 4 p.m.
Jewish Museum of Maryland, 15 Lloyd St., Baltimore; \$8; 410-732-6400 ext. 14

BOOK TALK

» Contemporary Fiction Book Group, Barnes and Noble, 8123 Honeygo Blvd., Baltimore; 7 p.m.; free; 410-933-9670.



Astral Winds consists of five woodwind players. - Courtesy photo

Five fly on the winds

By Marie Gullard
Examiner Correspondent

Few knew that a chance meeting almost four years ago among five woodwind players would develop into a successful collaboration — the quintet known as Astral Winds.

"We're all very different in ages and backgrounds," said Larisa Gelman, the group's bassoon player. "But sometimes it just clicks."

And it did in 2003, when these five strangers gathered to perform together at the Young Concert Artists International Auditions.

Today, with a full season of performances mapped out, Astral Winds gathers together in various cities to play.

Gelman will travel from her home in the Bronx, N.Y. to meet up with her friends for a gig this Friday at An die Musik. Paul LaFollette, horn player, and clarinetist Jose Franch-Ballester will both come to Baltimore from Philadelphia, while flutist Jasmine Choi flies in from Cincinnati. Katherine Needleman, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's principal oboe, is the group's only local.

"I love the quintet," Needleman said. "They are four of my best friends."

She also loves the intimacy of performing as a quintet, and describes its differences from a full orchestra as allowing a "much broader freedom with the music [and] control of every aspect of the program."

Friday's show will highlight "Autumn Music," composed in 1995 by contemporary composer Jennifer Higdon, who taught Needleman at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia.

"The piece is beautiful, almost dark in color, a vision of lying on the grass and watching the leaves flickering in the sunlight," Needleman said.

Jacques Ibert's composition "Trois Pieces Breves" is a characteristically French piece that captures the spirit of a woodwind quartet, according to Gelman.

Included in the program are Klughardt's romantic and light-hearted "Quintet in C Major, Op.79," and Eugene Bozza's "Scherzo."

"Astral Winds' repertoire is full and rich," An die Musik owner Henry Wong said. "Last year they played to a packed house."

"An die Musik is a perfect and intimate room for our music," Needleman said. "There is involvement with the audience you can't get in a concert hall."

SOUNDS » COWBOY JUNKIES

Blazing new trails

By Nancy Dunham
Examiner Correspondent

Think of "The Trinity Session," the second album released by The Cowboy Junkies, as the perfect storm of music.

Recorded in one 14-hour session at Toronto's Church of the Holy Trinity, the album sold more than 1.5 million copies internationally. The 1988 release included original material as well as a cover version of The Velvet Underground's "Sweet Jane."

A recent remake of that album, in the same venue and staged the same as the earlier recording, was filmed and is slated for a fall release on DVD.

"We did the 'Trinity Session Revisited,'" said bass player Alan Anton, longtime friend of the three Timmins siblings who make up the rest of the Toronto-born band. "We had Natalie Merchant and other guest artists on this."

Redoing the album made sense, Anton said, because of the popularity it still enjoys. Yet the band strove to make the songs a bit different on the new DVD by bringing in guest artists and giving each song "a bit of a twist."

That's not to say the band is resting on its laurels. Far from it.

They are touring in support of the recently released CD "At The End of Paths Taken," which has received high praise from critics.

"Songs so intimate that they sound like singer Margo Timmins could be whispering them in your ear remain the group's hallmark, but the delivery continues to grow more sophisticated," Billboard magazine reported.

Anton and his handmates are pleased by the reviews of the work he calls "almost a concept album," with plenty of strings and synthesizers. Thus far, the album has also been well received by fans.

"We are playing quite a bit from the new album on this tour," Anton said. "Thematically it is pretty focused. ... People are responding well to that."

But the fans who come to the show will also hear plenty of the music that has made the Cowboy Junkies famous.

"Growing up, people have discovered those songs through word of mouth," said Anton, who insists the band doesn't grow weary of playing the older songs. "When we're in concert, we are intent on playing [those songs] so that they are perfect. ... That keeps it fresh."



IF YOU GO

The Cowboy Junkies

» Venue: Rams Head Live, 20 Market Place, Baltimore
» Time: 7 p.m., Wednesday
» Tickets: \$25
» More info: ticketmaster.com; 410-547-SEAT

IF YOU GO

Astral Winds

» Venue: An die Musik LIVE! 409 N. Charles St., Baltimore
» Time: 8:00 p.m. Friday at Wine reception following the concert
» Tickets: \$15; \$12 students and seniors
» More info: 410-385-2638