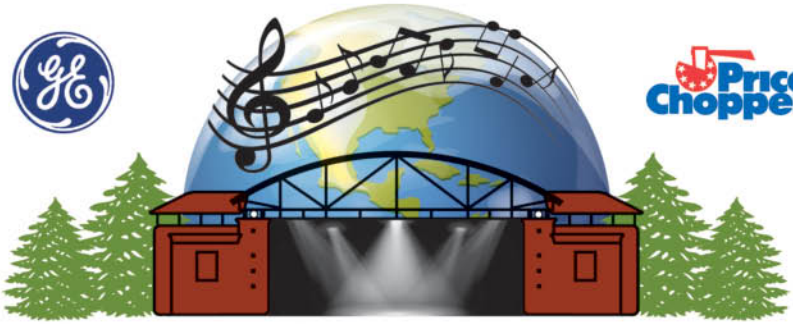

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# MUSIC HAVEN CONCERT SERIES

Greetings!

As we embark on the 25th anniversary season of free world-class concerts here in Central Park, I find myself celebrating the fact that Music Haven has truly become a viable stop for the unique and stunning international talent that tours the Northeast each summer.

I'm proud that the grassroots approach which defined our series during the early years hasn't changed. We remain committed to presenting outstanding, often underexposed artists from all over the world. The City of Schenectady, Mother Nature and Proctors provide the setting, while our generous sponsors and supporters insure that a free seat awaits anyone and everyone. The magic that results is as much a product of the artists' musical energy as it is of your respect and enthusiasm for the cultural experience.

So, come travel the world with us, one concert at a time. And rest assured that indeed some of the best things in life *are* free. Here's to a memorable season of journeys.

Fondly,

Mona

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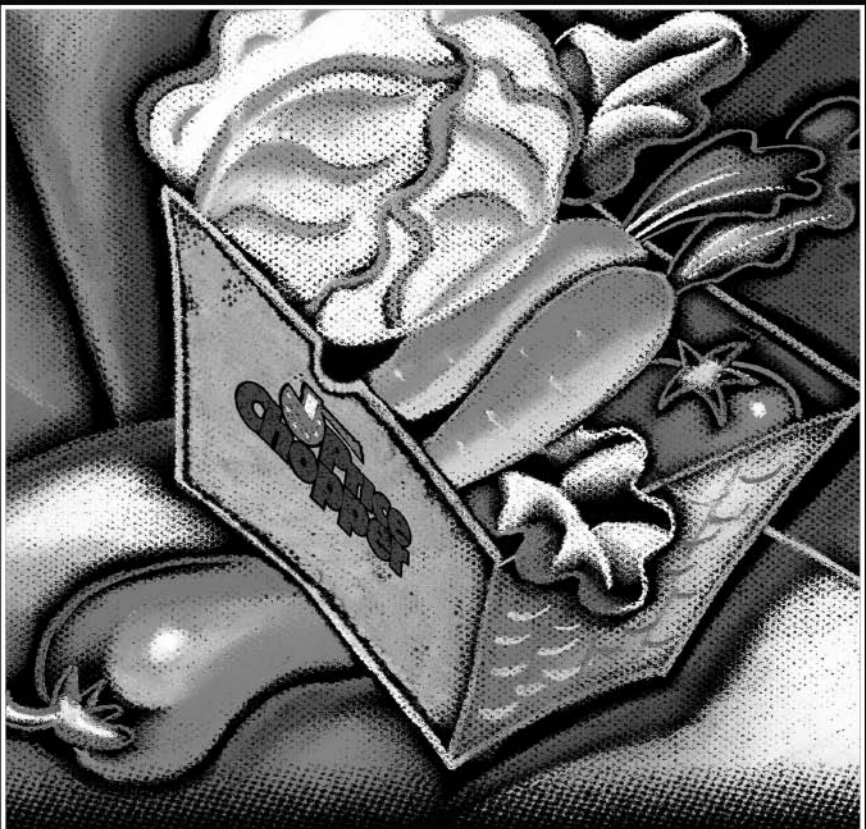

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Summer 2014

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Schenectady's Central Park, the wonderful Agnes MacDonald Music Haven Stage and the 25th season of the Music Haven Concert Series.

Schenectady is truly lucky to host such an impressive lineup of world-class performers every summer. Music Haven Producing Artistic Director Mona Golub has put together an especially powerful slate of talent for this silver anniversary summer.

Zimbabwe's Mokoomba, making its North American premiere; Eileen Ivers, dubbed "the Jimi Hendrix of the violin;" on its first American tour, Cuba's classic big band, Conjunto Chappottín y Sus Estrellas; Mississippi blues great James "Superharp" Cotton; legendary Louisiana Zydeco king Jeffery Broussard; and jazzy season closer Ghost Train Orchestra (with special guest Colleen Pratt!) — all will be performing for your enjoyment right here at the Music Haven.

I encourage everyone to come and be captivated by these artists.

Enjoy!

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# MUSIC HAVEN CONCERT SERIES

## *Mokoomba*

## june 29

**Special Guests: Kakande Quartet**

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# Mokoomba

Victoria Falls. Located on the Zambezi River, it is the largest waterfall in the world, with its traditional name, Mosi-ao-Tunya, translating to "the smoke that thunders." Next to it is the rural, remote and isolated town of Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe—the home of Mokoomba, Africa's most exciting young band.

Mokoomba is making its long-awaited debut on North American soil right here at the Music Haven Concert Series.

Mosi-ao-Tunya is a Tongan expression, and much of Mokoomba's music is sung in bright Tongan harmony. It is a Bantu language that is obscure even throughout much of Zimbabwe, but it has not created a barrier for Mokoomba's breathtaking meld of modern and traditional instruments, dazzling vocals and yes, sweet thunder.

Often referred to as "the next generation of Zimbabwean hope," Mokoomba formed in 2001, its name stemming from a deep respect that the Tongan people have for the Zambezi River and for the vibrant life that it brings to their music and culture.

In 2007, the sextet, led by vocalist Mathias Muzaza (who speaks six languages), entered its first Music Crossroads Local Festival in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, going on to blow audiences away at the National Festival held in Harare, later that year. The following August, Mokoomba took top honors at the Music Crossroads InterRegional Festival in Lilongwe, Malawi, winning a chance to record an album (*Kweseka*) and embark on a European tour.

Since then, the group has become an international phenomenon, bringing the sound of southern Africa to many corners of the globe, including performances at WOMEX and WOMAD and on the influential BBC show *Later with Jools Holland*. The band has also won rafts of awards and accolades along the way, the latest of which, garnered in December of 2013 at London's Barbican, is the prestigious "Best Newcomer" title in the UK's Songlines Music Awards.

Mokoomba's brilliant sophomore effort, *Rising Tide*, was produced by famed Ivorian bassist and singer Manou Gallo. Its explosive blend of deep grooves, serpentine guitar riffs and mesmerizing group vocals prompted fROOTS magazine to name it "one of the 10 best album of the year."

At the Music Haven, Muzaza and company (including guitarist Trustworth Samende, bassist Abundance Mutori, keyboardist Donald Moyo, drummer Ndaba Coster Moyo and percussionist Miti Mugande) will delight with an electrifying mix of Afro-fusion energy and tantalizing traditional Tongan beats.

German music journalist Thorsten Bednarz claims, "I've seen the future of Afrosound and it is called Mokoomba." We think you'll agree.

## Kakande Quartet

Famoro Dioubate hails from well north and west of Zimbabwe, growing up in Conakry, Guinea, an important port city on the Atlantic coast of Africa. He descends from a long line of griots—West African storytellers, praise singers and keepers of oral tradition.

Also like his forebears, including the legendary El Hadj Djelli Sory Kouyoate, Dioubate is a master of the centuries-old balafon—a wooden xylophone developed in the 1300s in nearby Mali.

Throughout his teens, Dioubate studied with his grandfather, Kouyoate, as well as with Cheik Smith-Sherif and Sekou Camara Cobra in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

Prior to launching a solo career in the United States in the late 1990s, Dioubate worked extensively with Sekouba Kandia Kouyate, Mory Kante and Groupe Standard, which accompanied most of the visiting great stars of African music in Guinea.


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# MUSIC HAVEN CONCERT SERIES

## Eileen Ivers

## july 13

**Special Guest: Annalivia**

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# Eileen Ivers

Eileen Ivers was eight years old when she played her first traditional Irish tune. She hasn't stopped since. The daughter of Irish immigrants, she grew up in the Bronx, thick in the New York melting pot of sounds, tastes and cultures—a diversity which informs her music to this day.

By her teen years, and under the tutelage of Martin Mulvihill, the young fiddler was reaching well beyond her grasp, grabbing nine All-Ireland Fiddle Championships, and tossing in a tenth (on tenor banjo) for good measure. She also pulled down over 30 championship medals, making her one of the most awarded musicians ever to compete in the prestigious national competitions.

While the laurels brought her notoriety, they didn't exactly bring her fame. *Riverdance* took care of that. In 1995, Ivers—a founding member of Cherish the Ladies—took over the fiddle chair in the pioneering show, touring the world and taking Celtic culture to new corners.

Following *Riverdance*, Ivers—who graduated magna cum laude in Mathematics from Iona College—became one of the most in-demand fiddlers around. She's played with Sting, Hall & Oates, The Chieftains, Patti Smith, Al DiMeola, Steve Gadd, jazz violinist Regina Carter and symphonies around the world. She's played for presidents and royalty, and brought hometown flair to the soundtrack for the film *Gangs of New York*.

Critics have been unstinting in their praise, with *The New York Times* calling Ivers, "The Jimi Hendrix of the violin," and *The Washington Post* crowing, "She suggests the future of the Celtic fiddle."

Intrigued by the multicultural sounds of her New York youth, Ivers put her mathematical mind to work, seeking parallels in the traditional music styles of other cultures. Her immersion led to the concept of Immigrant Soul, which became both a production and a band, fusing the best elements of many modes for Ivers' signature open-eared sound.

Now, for 2014, Ivers is expanding yet again with *Beyond the Bog Road*, a multimedia presentation that will encompass music, story, dance and film. The show will celebrate the journey of the Irish immigrant and showcase how Irish music and dance have integrated with various roots musics of North America to create one of the richest cross-fertilizations of folk styles in the world.

It is, in honor of her parents, a celebration of the immigrant's journey. It is the story of the Irish immigrant's impact on America and America's impact on the Irish immigrant.

At the Music Haven, Ivers will be accompanied by her stellar band, which matches her at every unexpected turn.

Vocalist Tommy McDonnell began has career as a drummer, so you won't be surprised to see him at his percussion rig. Guitarist Greg Anderson is a noted producer, known for his work with the likes of Richard Shindell, Whirligig and The Klezmatics. He was last seen at the Music Haven, with frequent performing partner Sara Milonovich, as part of the McKrells, in 2013. Bassist Lindsay Horner is an in-demand jazzman, playing with Greg Osby, Bill Frisell, Bobby Previte, Dave Douglas, Don Byron and others. His trio Jewels and Binoculars uses the Bob

Dylan catalog as a springboard for improvisation. And accordionist Buddy Connolly, like Ivers, is a three time All-Ireland champion with roots on the East Coast and in Ireland.

Eileen Ivers will change the way you think about the violin. We guarantee it.

## Annalivia

Annalivia's masterful string-band melding of Irish, Scottish, New England and Appalachian influences makes the trio a perfect fit alongside Eileen Ivers' far-reaching roots music. Liz Simmons, Flynn Cohen and Lissa Schneckenburger are all seasoned pros (having toured with Cathie Ryan, Aoife Clancy and Solas among others), with a stellar vocal blend to match the dazzling instrumental chops.


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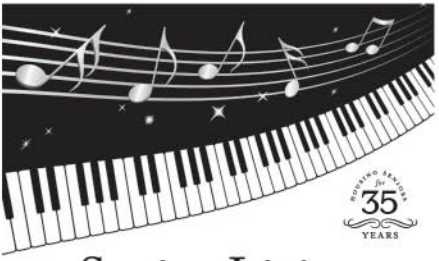


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# MUSIC HAVEN CONCERT SERIES

## *Conjunto Chappottín y Sus Estrellas*

## july 20

**Special Guest: Maria Zemantauski**

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# Conjunto Chappottín y Sus Estrellas

Imagine a hot Havana night in the 1930s. The music is bright, brassy and loud. People are dancing, shaking their hips and moving their bodies to the distinctive rhythm, irresistible because of the way it falls on the offbeat, pulling everyone into the snaky groove. It is the sound of *son*, the Afro-Cuban fusion heard round the world; the father of salsa and the mother of mambo.

Conjunto Chappottín y Sus Estrellas is the sound of son.

The large format ensemble traces its roots back to the 1940s, when founder Arsenio Rodriguez made the daring move to add brass and reeds to the classic Latin line-up. When Rodriguez left for New York in 1950, he handed the reins of his group to trumpeter Felix Chappottín, who added his own name and pushed the band even harder.

Today, Conjunto Chappottín—on its very first tour of America—is co-led by Felix's grandson, trumpeter Jesus Angel Chappottín Coto and it retains Rodriguez's trademark sound while looking straight ahead to the future.

Rodriguez was one of the most influential Cuban musicians of the 20th century, and his vision had a direct effect on the development of salsa and Latin jazz. Felix Chappottín, for his part, was often compared to New Orleans jazz legend Louis Armstrong, and has been a strong influence on the work of Eddie Palmieri, Arturo Sandoval and Jesus Alemany.

Joining Jesus Angel in the director's chair of Conjunto Chappottín y Sus Estrellas is singer/percussionist Miguelito Cuni, Jr. Cuni, too, continues a family tradition within the group, succeeding his father as lead vocalist.

Listen, underneath the horns, for the interaction between the *tres* and the piano. The tres, a guitarlike instrument with three courses of strings, supplies the important percolating ostinato figure known as the *guajeo*. The piano echoes the figure—one of the most direct connections to the genre's sub-Saharan roots—creating a hypnotic, trancelike bed for the group vocals and brass punctuations of Sus Estrellas.

If the guajeo moves your feet, it is Rodriguez's trademark trumpet attack—four strong—that moves the heart. Powerful, punchy and plangent, the brass lines tug at the emotions, creating a bittersweet harmony with the keening vocals.

Conjunto Chappottín y Sus Estrellas still emphasizes the African elements of its sound, perhaps more so than any other son superstars. In its complex, historic sound, you will hear elements of son-montuno, guajira, guaracha, mambo, danzon, danzonette, charanga, afro-son, bembe, rumba and cha cha cha. But you'll be way too busy dancing to worry too much about which one is which.

## Maria Zemantauski

Traveling the world one concert at a time should never prevent us from looking in our own backyard. There's plenty of world-class talent in the Capital Region, including the incredible Maria Zemantauski.

Zemantauski is one of the world's few heralded female flamenco-style guitarists, and one of even fewer female flamenco composers. In addition, she is an authority on the form and is frequently featured as a guest lecturer at colleges and universities nationwide.

"Zemantauski," as one reviewer put it, "has continually pushed the boundaries of the possible with her trusty 6-string, blending genres that have little or no business appearing on the same bill, much less in the same song. It's rarely less than electrifying to watch her do it."

We applaud the Music Haven Concert Series for 25 summers of world class concerts under the stars.

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# MUSIC HAVEN CONCERT SERIES

## James Cotton

## july 27

**Special Guest: Matt Mirabile**

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# James Cotton

Tunica, Mississippi's "Superharp," James Cotton, is celebrating 70 years in showbiz. From humble beginnings learning how to make chicken and train sounds on a 15-cent harmonica to his current status as "The finest blues harmonica player alive" (according to *The Boston Herald*), Cotton has always remained true to the blues.

He is a living link to blues greats like Sonny Boy Williamson, Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters, as well a legend in his own right.

Cotton didn't just meet those masters, he played with them.

An uncle, who was aware that the young Cotton had learned his repertoire by listening to Williamson's *King Biscuit Time* radio show on Helena, Arkansas' KFFA, took him to meet the man. Cotton, recently orphaned, was only nine years old, but he immediately began traveling with the older bluesman, performing on the street outside of nightclubs and juke joints as an ersatz opening act for Williamson.

He was still underage by the time he hooked up with Howlin' Wolf in Black Fish, Arkanas at a rough joint called The Top Hat. From there, he really learned the road, driving Wolf to dates across the Mississippi delta.

Cotton had already cut some teenage tracks for Sam Philips' Sun Records by the time Muddy Waters came looking for him during a Happy Hour date at West Memphis' Dinette Lounge in 1954. Waters had recently lost his harp man and he'd heard good things about Cotton.

The rest, as they say, is history. Cotton stayed with Waters for 12 years (and also played on later comeback albums).

In 1967, Cotton became his own man, launching a string of classic albums like *Cotton In Your Ears, Cut You Loose* and *Taking Care of Business*, and earning a strong reputation as the ultimate showman.

Even today, at age 78, Cotton is not content to rest on his laurels. The revered record guide *Allmusic.com* calls his most recent release, 2013's *Cotton Mouth Man*, on Alligator Records, "one of the best albums of his career...his harp blasts full of passion, power and enough pure energy to light up the night sky."

Cotton still maintains his commitment to bringing only the very best musicians on the road. His current touring band includes Darrell Nulisch on vocals; Tom Holland on guitar and vocals; Noel Neal on bass; and Jerry Porter on drums.

He also maintains his commitment to bringing you the best show in the blues, every night.

"My audience always tells me how I'm doing," he says, with a knowing grin. "If I look out there and don't like what I see, I work harder."

## Matt Mirabile

Like Cotton, guitarist Matt Mirabile was born with the blues in his soul. But where Cotton found his voice in the reeds of a harmonica, Mirabile found his in the strings of an electric guitar.

The Capital Region blues scene has certainly spawned its share of great blues guitarists, including Charlie Smith, Albert Cummings and Scotty Mac, but Mirabile is in a class by himself, with a funky, burning tone and a bracing attack.

He's done his time as a sideman, and as a leader he brings a precision and edge to the blues, surrounding himself with top flight players.

Prepare to be amazed.

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# MUSIC HAVEN CONCERT SERIES

## *Jeffery Broussard & The Creole Cowboys*

## august 3

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# Jeffery Broussard & The Creole Cowboys

Zydeco. It's rich in history and in rhythm. Like so many Louisiana exports, the form is a combination of elements from disparate cultures, blended into a spicy gumbo of blues, Cajun and Creole influences.

Jeffery Broussard and his ten older siblings grew up on Zydeco music. As children in Opelousas' tiny, off-the-map corner of Frilot Cove, they heard their father Delton working with his seminal Creole band, The Lawtell Playboys.

In those days, the elder Broussard's music hadn't yet been tagged Zydeco. It was called French music, or even the more euphemistic French La La, but it had the key elements, including Delton's pulsing accordion two-step that would keep the dance floor active late into the Louisiana night.

The younger Broussard and his kin would cycle through the Playboys, but Jeffery (who played drums alongside his father) made his own mark in the late 1980s with the powerful Zydeco Force, which also featured his brother Shelton and his cousin Herbert.

With the nouveau Zydeco of Zydeco Force, Broussard established his own distinct style on the accordion. Hits like "Hey Madeline" and "B-Flat" made the group popular throughout the American southeast and also overseas.

While The Creole Cowboys retain Zydeco Force's trademark drive, they also hark back to the deepest roots of Zydeco, playing a more traditional style that emphasizes the sweet Creole sound, rather than the punch of rock and roll. The R&B elements so essential to Zydeco Force remain strong in Broussard's soulful vocals.

While Broussard has an "Accordionist of the Year" plaque from the Zydeco Music & Creole Heritage Awards, the addition of fiddle to his repertoire is slightly more recent. He was concerned that the style was dying off with the passing of older musicians, and he wanted to be sure that the tradition would not be lost with them.

"There are only five Creole fiddlers left," he says. "That's what gave me the interest to pick up the fiddle and start playing, because I felt that it was needed."

He is now every bit the master of the violin as he is of the accordion, and no one can match him on the squeezebox.

In fact, Connecticut radio host Peter "River City Slim" Rost says, "Jeffery Broussard is the king. I don't think there's anyone out there who can touch him on the accordion."

But Broussard remains humble, knowing that despite his prodigious skills and natural showmanship, he is part of a longer chain.

"Music," he says, "is a gift that God gave me to pass on. Music is in my genes, in my blood. I inherited it from my parents. I know nothing else better to do. It is a tradition that I have been in all of my life and I want to continue carrying my Daddy's legacy. I do it because it's something that I enjoy. I do it to make people happy, and myself. I don't want our traditions to die."

## Ramblin Jug Stompers

Ramblin Jug Stompers play 78 rpm music for the 21st century. They are the premier jug band of New York's Capital Region!

Ramblin Jug Stompers' *ramblin* style nods to the great tradition of American string band music while winking directly at the classic jug bands of the 60s folk scene, including The Jim Kweskin Jug Band, The Even Dozen Jug Band, Dave Van Ronk and The Lovin' Spoonful.

# MUSIC HAVEN CONCERT SERIES

## *Ghost Train Orchestra*

## august 10

**Special Guest: Colleen Pratt & Friends**

**Sponsored by:**

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# Ghost Train Orchestra

Brian Carpenter has one foot well placed in the past.

In 2006, the composer/arranger was hired as the musical director for an event marking the 90th anniversary of the historic Regent Theater in Boston. He ended up creating a band for the evening, a group capable of capturing the spirit of early jazz bandleaders like Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman, Tiny Parham, Fess Williams, and Charlie Johnson.

And Ghost Train Orchestra was born.

The group's debut album, *Hothouse Stomp*, drew acclaim from sources like NPR, *The Boston Globe* and the ambitious arts and culture journal *Burning Ambulance*, which crowed, "Carpenter is on a mission to make 21st Century listeners aware of just how much awesome music was being made in the early decades of the 20th century, by rooting out obscurities and tweaking the arrangements until they pop like fireworks."

*Hothouse* was a Carpenter-curated survey of sounds from Harlem and Chicago. The follow-up, *Book of Rhapsodies*, moved forward in time to the burgeoning chamber jazz of the 1930s. The disc honors the work of eccentric pioneers like Alec Wilder, Charlie Shavers, Reginald Foresythe and Raymond Scott (whose music powered much of the animated cult TV series *The Ren & Stimpy Show*).

Carpenter's crew is a powerful unit, with each artist bringing his or her own powers to bear on the whole.

"This is an amazing ensemble," *NYC Jazz Record* critic Andrew Velez says, "playing music like no others these days. There hasn't been big band music as exciting as this since forever."

In addition to leading the troupe, Carpenter plays trumpet and sings. He is joined in GTO by violinist Mazz Swift (Kanye West, Common and Jay-Z.); mandolinist/clarinetist Dennis Lichtman (Brain Cloud, Astrograss, King Wilkie); alto/baritone saxophonist Andy Laster (Julius Hemphill, Lyle Lovett, Elvis Costello); reed man Petr Cancura (Danilo Perez, Julian Lage, Bob Moses); trombonist/guitarist Curtis Hasselbring (Medeski Martin and Wood, Slavic Soul Party, Golem); tubist Ron Caswell (They Might Be Giants, Anthony Braxton, Max Roach); drummer Rob Garcia; guitarist Avi Bortnick (John Scofield, Bobby McFerrin, Forro in the Dark); and bassist Michael Bates (Chris Speed, Russ Johnson, Tom Rainey).

"On the surface," says *Downbeat*'s Davis Inman, "the Ghost Train Orchestra may look like just another Brooklyn-based jazz revival act, but Carpenter and his collaborators find plenty of new life in these old charts and 78s."

And the same venerable magazine's publisher, Frank Alkyer, says, "Brian Carpenter is a multi-faceted artist, musician, composer, arranger, film director, radio producer and more. In short, he's a guy who follows his muse. In this case, that muse is jazz of the 1920s and I'm mighty thankful he took this detour. *Hothouse Stomp* is a loving tip of the cap to some of the unsung greats of Harlem and Chicago's South Side...the only thing better than hearing this recording would be seeing the band live."

And you're about to do just that.

## Colleen Pratt

For 30 years, Colleen Pratt has been one of the most in-demand vocalists in the Capital Region. She is a master singer, as comfortable fronting the 19-piece Empire Jazz Orchestra as she is sitting in with Doc Scanlon or leading her own group, Colleen Pratt & Friends.

Pratt is the daughter of noted musicians Helen and Norman Pratt; the niece of jazzman Bobby Pratt; and a Recipient of a Swingtime Jazz Society "Lifetime Achievement Award."

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**Frank K. Dyer**
Senior Vice President - Complex Manager
30 S Pearl St, Fl P2
Albany, NY 12207
Tel: 518-447-8400
frank.dyer2@wellsfargoadvisors.com

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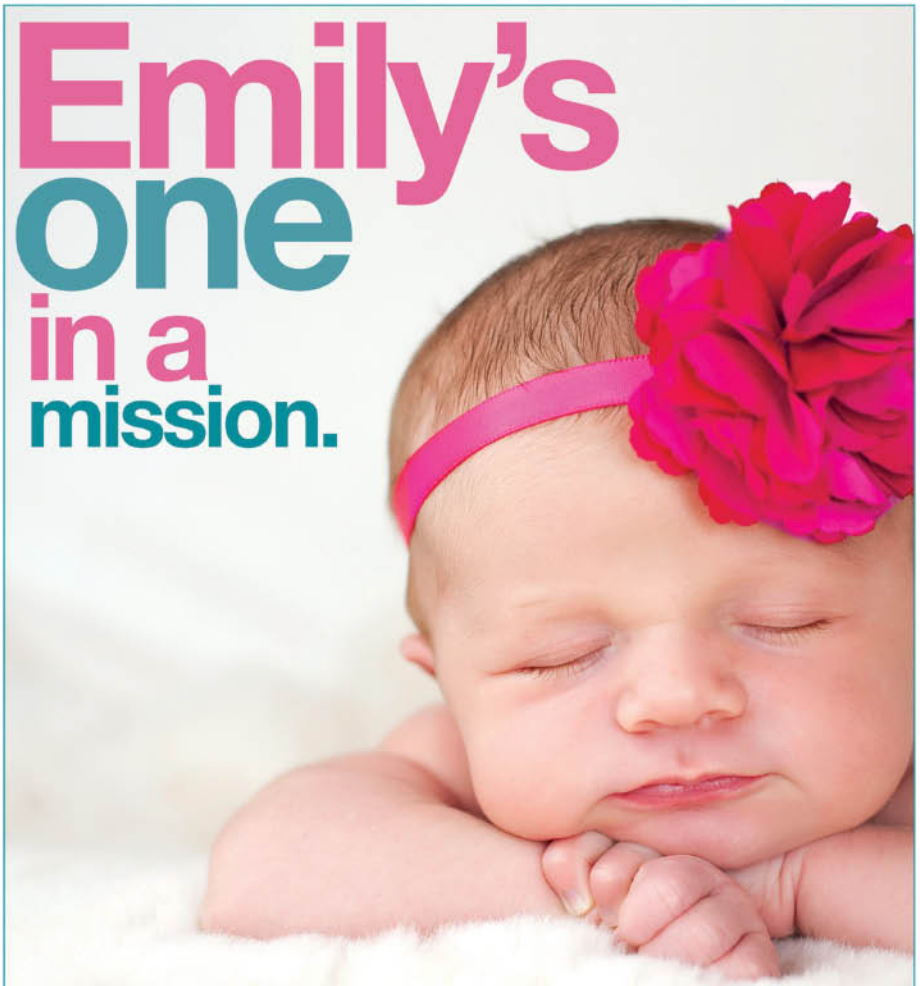

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