

LONG TIME TRAVELING

Anonymous 4

Marsha Genensky, Susan Hellauer, Jacqueline Horner, Johanna Maria Rose

with special guests

Darol Anger, fiddles, mandolins

Scott Nygaard, guitar

The tunes on *Long Time Traveling* are filled with imagery of the journey, of birds and flying, of reaching and crossing over the Jordan River. Most of these songs have themselves been traveling for a very long time, in a wonderful intertwining of oral and written traditions that has flourished for many generations. Which of them were newly composed and which were taken down from someone's singing or playing and then arranged can't always be determined.

The elements of Anglo-American song take part in an endless game of mix and match: dance airs are set to sacred words, worldly and spiritual texts share the same musical notes, and hymns that we associate with certain much-loved tunes can also be sung to other melodies. The tune most commonly known as **Poor Wayfaring Stranger** appears with the religious ballad text, "I am a poor wayfaring stranger," in the lyric folk song, **You Fair and Pretty Ladies**, in the haunting folk hymn, **Parting Friends**, and in a bluesy instrumental version. Meanwhile, John Newton's poem, "Saviour, visit thy plantation," has attached itself to two different tunes: **Return Again** and **Merrick**.

The folk song, **The Lost Girl**, has been likened to the English piece, "Streams of Lovely Nancy," and **You Fair and Pretty Ladies** is said to be similar to the Scottish "O Waly Waly." Their melodies may or may not actually have their origins in the British Isles, but like many of the tunes you'll hear tonight, they bear the influence of English, Scottish, and Irish traditional song.

The melody of **Wondrous Love** pre-dates the 19th-century text and three-part arrangement in which we sing it by several hundred years. The tunes for **I'm on my journey home** and **Ecstasy**, revival songs identifiable by their rousing choruses, were either newly composed or adapted from oral tradition, and arranged in spare three-part settings by nineteenth-century Southern tune book compilers, who doubled as itinerant singing school masters. The tunes they composed and arranged are known as shape-note tunes, and the tunebooks they published during the first half of the nineteenth century are referred to as shape-note tunebooks, because they contain a musical notation using four different shapes for noteheads (triangle for fa, circle for sol, rectangle for la, and diamond for mi) intended to help students to learn to read music quickly and easily. Although no new four-shape tunebooks appeared after the mid-1850's, certain of the old four-shape tunebooks have never gone out of fashion, and the shape-note singing tradition flourishes to this day. Other revival songs and strophic folk hymns on tonight's show with origins in the four-shape tunebooks include **Like Noah's Weary Dove**, **Return Again**, **Merrick**, and **Parting Friends**.

Gospel songs first became popular in the mid-nineteenth century, in the Northeastern cities, just as the last new four-shape tunebooks were published in the rural South. But the song traditions overlap. **The Shining Shore**, the earliest of the gospel songs you'll hear tonight, dates from the mid-1850's, several years prior to the first publication of the four-shape tune, **I'm on my Journey Home**. Unlike the Southern shape-note tunebook compiler/singing school masters, who had most often received their own musical education from other traveling singing school masters, the earliest gospel song writers had studied European musical style and tradition; their compositions feature much more sentimental texts and a greater inclination toward richer harmonies than are commonly found among early settings of folk hymns, religious ballads, and revival songs. Even so, some of the simpler and more folk-like of the gospel songs, like **The Shining Shore**, almost immediately found their way into Southern seven-shape tunebooks and hymnbooks,

alongside favorite older four-shape tunes. Other gospel songs you'll hear tonight include **Where We'll Never Grow Old** and **Just Over in the Gloryland**, both of which date from the early twentieth century, and **Green Pastures**, which was written in the early 1960's.

Our versions of religious ballads and folk songs are influenced by the performances of traditional singers from the Southern mountains. We sing several shape-note tunes (**I'm on my Journey Home**, **Ecstasy**, and **Wondrous Love**) in the three-part harmonizations in which they first appear in the nineteenth-century tunebooks. We also sing two gospel songs (**The Shining Shore** and **Where We'll Never Grow Old**) in their original vocal settings. The other folk hymns, revival songs, and gospel songs you'll hear tonight have new arrangements by members of Anonymous 4, Darol Anger, Mike Marshall, and Scott Nygaard. Most of the tunes on tonight's show come from Anonymous 4's fall 2006, *Gloryland*. But you can hear several of tonight's tunes on our CD, *American Angels*. And you'll find **Father Adieu**, and a couple of the instrumental tunes from tonight's show, on *Generation Nation*, the spring 2006 CD release of Darol Anger's Republic of Strings.

Marsha Genensky

We'll be singing and playing some of these tunes. You may hear others, as well:

Religious ballads and lyric folk songs

Wayfaring Stranger • The Lost Girl • You Fair and Pretty Ladies

Shape-note tunes

I'm on my Journey Home • Ecstasy • Wondrous Love

Folk hymns and revival songs

**Like Noah's Weary Dove • Return Again • Mercy Seat • Father Adieu
I Shall Be Satisfied • Merrick**

Gospel songs

**Where We'll Never Grow Old • The Shining Shore • Sweet By and By
Angel Band • Shall We Gather at the River • Green Pastures
Just Over in the Gloryland**

Darol plays a fiddle made by Bob Kogut and a mandolin built by Benjamin Wilcox.
He uses some prototype Glasser bows, and D¹Addario strings,

Scott plays a Dana Bourgeois guitar on this tour. He uses L.R. Baggs electronics, AER acoustic amps, and D¹Addario strings.

Thanks to Audix microphones for the excellent mics used on these concerts.

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