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CONCERTS FROM THE **LIBRARY** OF **CONGRESS**

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THE IRA AND LEONORE GERSHWIN FUND
IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

CMA
SONG
WRITERS
SERIES

Tuesday, April 21, 2015 ~ 8 pm
Coolidge Auditorium
Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson Building

The IRA AND LEONORE GERSHWIN FUND in the Library of Congress was established in 1992 by a bequest from Mrs. Gershwin to perpetuate the name and works of her husband, Ira, and his brother, George, and to provide support for worthy related music and literary projects.

Presented in association with the Country Music Association

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Reserved tickets not claimed by five minutes before the beginning of the event will be distributed to stand-by patrons.

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**The Library of Congress
Coolidge Auditorium
Tuesday, April 21, 2015 — 8 pm**

THE IRA AND LEONORE GERSHWIN FUND
IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

**COUNTRY MUSIC ASSOCIATION
SONGWRITERS SERIES**

**BILL ANDERSON
MAC DAVIS
MO PITNEY
PAM TILLIS**



Program

SELECTIONS TO BE ANNOUNCED FROM THE STAGE

About the Program

The mission of the **Country Music Association** (CMA) is to heighten the awareness of Country Music and support its on-going growth by recognizing excellence in the genre, and serving as a repository for critical and timely information and communication, while providing a forum for industry leadership dialogue toward its goals.

Launched in 2005 at Joe's Pub in New York City, the **CMA Songwriters Series** gives fans an intimate look at where the hits they love originated. For over a decade, the CMA Songwriters Series has been exposing fans across the country and the globe to the artisans who, through their craft, pen hits that touch the lives of millions of music fans. Since it launched, the CMA Songwriters Series has presented more than 90 shows in 15 cities, including Boston, Belfast, Dublin, Los Angeles, Paris, Phoenix and Washington, DC at the renowned Library of Congress.

The CMA Songwriters Series kicked off its 11th season in 2015 with standing-room-only shows at the Sundance Film Festival, and also presented shows in London and Nashville. Additional 2015 shows are scheduled for Chicago, Dallas, and New York.

In 2012 and 2013, the CMA Songwriters Series expanded overseas with shows in London and Ireland, including being taped for two BBC broadcast specials. The series has featured 148 of music's most gifted storytellers who collectively have 62 CMA Song of the Year nominations. CMA Triple Play Award winner, CMA Board member, and member of the Songwriters Hall of Fame Bob DiPiero has championed and been a host of the series.

Some of the artists who have been part of the series include Dierks Bentley, Clint Black, Kristen Bush, Kix Brooks, Kenny Chesney, Eric Church, Billy Currington, Randy Houser, Jamey Johnson, Miranda Lambert, Little Big Town, Patty Loveless, Ronnie Milsap, Kip Moore, David Lee Murphy, Gretchen Peters, Kellie Pickler, The Band Perry, Josh Turner, Carrie Underwood, Phil Vassar, and Chris Young.

CMA has partnered with public television's critically-acclaimed concert series *Front and Center* to produce 55-minute concert specials of the CMA Songwriters Series that have featured Dierks Bentley, Bob DiPiero and Brandy Clark, Sara Evans and Martina McBride, Hunter Hayes, and Little Big Town. To learn more, visit www.cmaworld.com and www.cmasongwritersseries.com.



About the Artists

Bill Anderson has been using the saying "If you want someone's attention, whisper" as a philosophy for over fifty years to capture the attention of millions of country music fans around the world, en route to becoming a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame and one of the most popular, most enduring entertainers of our time. He's known as "Whisperin' Bill," a nickname hung on him years ago as a result of his breathy voice and

his warm, soft approach to singing a country song. His credentials, however, shout his prominence. He is one of the most awarded songwriters in the history of country music, a million-selling recording artist many times over, television game show host, network soap opera star, spokesman for a nationwide restaurant chain, and a consummate onstage performer. His back-up group, The Po' Folks Band, has long been considered one of the finest instrumental and vocal groups in the business.

Bill Anderson was born in Columbia, South Carolina, but spent most of his growing-up years around Atlanta, Georgia. He graduated from the University of Georgia with a degree in journalism, having worked his way through college as a disc jockey on nearby radio stations. It was while he was still in school that he began performing and writing songs. At the age of nineteen he composed the country classic, "City Lights," and began rapidly carving his place in musical history. He moved to Nashville, Tennessee, secured a recording contract with Decca Records, and began turning out hit after hit with songs like "Po' Folks," "Mama Sang A Song," "The Tips of My Fingers," "8x10," and the unforgettable country and pop smash, "Still." His compositions have been recorded by such diverse musical talents as Ray Price, Porter Wagoner, James Brown, Debbie Reynolds, Ivory Joe Hunter, Kitty Wells, Faron Young, Lawrence Welk, Dean Martin, Jerry Lee Lewis, Aretha Franklin, Walter Brennan, and many others.

Anderson has been voted Songwriter of the Year six times, Male Vocalist of the Year, half of the Duet of the Year with both Jan Howard and Mary Lou Turner, has hosted and starred in the Country Music Television Series of the Year, seen his band voted Band of the Year, and in 1975 was elected to the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame. Ten years later, the State of Georgia honored him by choosing him as only the seventh living performer inducted into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame. In 1993, he was made a member of the Georgia Broadcasters' Hall of Fame. In 1994, South Carolina inducted him into their Music and Entertainment Hall of Fame. And in 2001, he received the ultimate honor, membership in Nashville's prestigious Country Music Hall of Fame.

An entertainer in every sense of the word, Bill Anderson was the first country artist to host a network game show, starring on ABC-TV's, *The Better Sex*. He also appeared for three years on ABC's daytime soap opera, *One Life To Live*. For six years he hosted a country music game show on The Nashville Network called *Fandango*, later an interview show called *Opry Backstage*, and was a co-producer of another TNN Show called *You Can Be A Star*. In addition, Anderson has appeared frequently as a guest star on television's top variety and game shows, including *The Tonight Show*, *The Today Show*, *Match Game*, *Family Feud*, *Hee Haw*, and others. For seven years he hosted the acclaimed *Bill Anderson Visits with the Legends* show on XM satellite radio.

Bill Anderson's autobiography, *Whisperin' Bill*, was published by Longstreet Press in 1989 and relates the fascinating details of his life and lengthy career in show business. The book, which Anderson personally wrote over a period of three years, made bestseller lists all across the South. His second book, a humorous look at the music business titled, *I Hope You're Living as High on the Hog as the Pig you Turned Out to Be*, was published in 1993 and is currently in its sixth printing. His most recent literary effort is *Letters to My Fans—Volume One*.

Since 1997, Bill has also hosted the highly-rated television series on RFD-TV called *Country's Family Reunion*, a show in which legendary country stars sit alongside both their peers and newcomers to the industry, singing their songs and swapping their stories. Despite his hectic schedule and the demands of his multi-faceted business enterprises, Anderson has made a renewed commitment to his first love—songwriting. He closed out the 20th century with a pair of number 1 hits, “Wish You Were Here” sung by Mark Wills, and the GRAMMY-nominated “Two Teardrops” sung by Steve Wariner. His song, “Too Country,” recorded by Brad Paisley along with Anderson, Buck Owens and George Jones, won the CMA Vocal Event of the Year award for 2001. During a period of twenty-five months between November, 2005, and December, 2007, Anderson enjoyed perhaps the most fertile period of his songwriting life. He won CMA Song of the Year honors for his and Jon Randall’s poignant ballad “Whiskey Lullaby” recorded by Brad Paisley and Alison Krauss, a Dove Award from the Gospel Music Association for co-writing with Tia Sillers the Country/Gospel Recorded Song of the Year, “Jonah, Job, and Moses,” sung by the Oak Ridge Boys, and his first ACM Song of the Year Award for “Give It Away,” recorded by George Strait and written with Buddy Cannon and Jamey Johnson. “Give It Away” went on to win the CMA Song of the Year as well as affording Anderson his fourth GRAMMY nomination.

In 2002, Broadcast Music, Inc. named Anderson its first country music songwriting icon, placing him alongside R&B legends Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, and James Brown as the only recipients of that prestigious award. In 2008, the Academy of Country Music honored him with their inaugural Poets Award. Anderson continues to paint a broad stroke across the Nashville music scene. He has been a member of the Grand Ole Opry since 1961 and performs there regularly. He continues to tour and to record, his latest releases being the self-descriptive, “Songwriter” in 2010 and the critically acclaimed “Life” in late 2013. In addition, Bear Family Records has released Anderson’s first box set, *Bill Anderson: The First Ten Years*, a 126-song collection of works initially released between 1956 and 1966. The four-disc package is accompanied by a 64-page hardcover book full of stories and timeless photographs.

On the personal side, Anderson lives on Old Hickory Lake outside Nashville where he spends as much time as possible with his three children and eight grandchildren. He is a boater and sports enthusiast who has been known to adjust his work schedule to fit around a ball game he just “has to see.” He is an avid reader, his bookshelves lined with mysteries, biographies, books on religion, sports, and humor.



At his commercial peak in the mid-1970s, **Mac Davis** was one of America’s most popular entertainers, a countrypolitan-styled singer, and an actor who found considerable success in both fields. Born Scott Davis on January 21, 1942, in Buddy Holly’s hometown of Lubbock, Texas, he began performing in local rock groups while still in his teens. After moving to Georgia, Davis first broke into the music business in 1962, when he was hired by the Chicago-based record label Vee-Jay as their Atlanta-based regional manager. After joining the Liberty label three years later, in 1967 he moved to Los Angeles to head the company’s publishing arm, Metric Music; in addition to running Metric’s day-to-

day operations, he also began composing his own songs, with Glen Campbell, Bobby Goldsboro, Lou Rawls, and Kenny Rogers & the First Edition among the artists recording his work.

In 1968, Elvis Presley recorded Davis' "A Little Less Conversation," and soon after the King was requesting more of his work. After notching a Top 40 hit with Davis' "Memories," Presley reached the Top Five in 1969 with the songwriter's "In the Ghetto," a single from the landmark *From Elvis in Memphis* record. Davis also arranged the music for Presley's first television special before signing his own recording contract in 1970. In that year, he released his first chart single, "Whoever Finds This, I Love You," from his debut album, *Song Painter*.

In 1972, Davis scored a number one pop hit with "Baby, Don't Get Hooked on Me," which also reached the country Top 20. His crossover success continued throughout the decade, with singles like 1974's "Stop and Smell the Roses," 1975's "Burnin' Thing," and the following year's "Forever Lovers" scoring with listeners in both camps. Between 1974 and 1976, Davis hosted a musical variety show for NBC television, followed by a string of specials; in 1979, he also starred in the film *North Dallas Forty* with Nick Nolte.

Davis' success continued in the early '80s; "It's Hard to Be Humble," the title track of his 1980 album, was the first of four consecutive Top Ten country hits that culminated with his biggest country single, "Hooked on Music," the next year. In 1980, he also starred in a TV movie, *Cheaper to Keep Her*. However, a co-starring role opposite Jackie Gleason and Karl Malden in 1983's disastrous *The Sting II* effectively ended Davis' career in Hollywood, and by 1985, he had recorded his last Top Ten hit, "I Never Made Love (Till I Made Love With You)." In 1990, Davis made a comeback as a songwriter, co-authoring Dolly Parton's hit "White Limozeen;" that same year, he also took over the title role in the Broadway hit *The Will Rogers Follies*. *Will Write Songs for Food*, his first record in nearly a decade, appeared in 1994.



When **Mo Pitney** sings "let me tell you about country" in his debut single, he's doing more than telling. He's showing. Appropriately titled, the song "Country" is as much positioning statement as introduction. In three minutes and sixteen seconds, it is almost precisely who he is in word and deed. The vocal delivery, storytelling, musicianship and reflections of his outdoor lifestyle—as well as faith, family and patriotism—offer a spot-on portrayal. Joined by early fan favorites "Clean Up on Aisle Five" and "Come Do a Little Life," the song carves an unmistakably country yet completely fresh groove for the genre. In short, it sounds like nothing else, but absolutely belongs in Pitney's musical arsenal.

To paraphrase the song, a life in music isn't a place on a map; it's a place in Mo Pitney's heart. "I just love music," Pitney says, exhibiting atypical maturity for someone still in his early twenties. "It has never been about praise. Playing the Grand Ole Opry was an amazing experience, but I have just as much fun sitting on my bed playing along to an old record. It's always been that way." This music-centered outlook is already generating

the unsought acclaim of which he speaks. Perhaps the best example is the aforementioned Opry performance. "Everybody asked me if I was nervous, but I don't think I was," he says. "I definitely thought about it a lot more than I normally do. My respect for that stage and the circle is great."

For his first song, he selected "Clean Up on Aisle Five" and eyed one goal: to sing his heart out. "I didn't feel like anybody was sucked into the song at all, but when it was over I stepped back from the microphone and people erupted," he says. A standing ovation approaching a full minute ensued. "After about 30 seconds, I stepped forward to say something because I thought I heard them dying down, but they just got louder. I lost it. It took me about a week to come off that feeling."

That pivotal moment capped a journey that started in the red brick town of Cherry Valley, Illinois, where Pitney grew up loving the outdoors. "Right out my back door was a lake about a mile away," he says. "I'd ride my bike there with a fishing pole on each handlebar, like two tridents sticking out in front of me."

Music was a family affair, and Pitney picked up the drums at six and guitar at twelve. "I learned how to play with a cast on my arm by laying a rag over my dad's guitar so it wouldn't get scratched," he says. "Johnny Cash at San Quentin was my introduction to playing music. I learned the whole album."

Two weeks later, he played two Cash songs at an open mic night—his first public performance. "After I played, I saw a guy backstage playing a banjo, so I picked that up for a couple of years. By age fifteen, I grabbed the guitar again playing lead acoustic, my brother played bass and we had a friend who played mandolin." His affection for bluegrass led him to Keith Whitley. "When I heard him sing it helped me bridge over into country music. I started hearing great country songs, songwriters and singers ... and I just fell in love."

Encouraged to move to Nashville by a songwriting friend, Pitney was the uncommon arrival who receives early interest from record labels. He signed with Curb and began working on bringing his songs and sound into alignment with his musical vision. One of the lynchpins was connecting with his producer, Tony Brown (a producer for George Strait).

"Instead of trying to put some songs together to come out of my mouth and create an artist with my face, Brown said, 'I want to find out who you are, pull it out of you and put it on tape.' It wasn't just the way he said it, it was in everything he did. Realizing I can create a record the way I want to and use the musicians I want was an eye-opening experience. We recorded my vocals while I was sitting on a stool and playing guitar at the same time, so it's a live record in a lot of ways. My hands were untied."

As music lovers become exposed to his music, rousing receptions may be something he'll become accustomed to seeing. But they won't change Pitney's core motivation. "Even if this thing doesn't go huge, I believe that I can make a decent living playing music," he says. "And I always knew that I could do that. When I was younger, my plan was

bluegrass. I used to buy and sell cars, I did body work and I trained bird dogs. I figured I would just kind of piddle around, doing different things around the music."

"People who have done this for a long time think there's a place for my music, and I hope that's the case. My eyes are set on being successful, but success is not number one for me. If I can make a comfortable living and have a career making music and keep my head on straight, that's my goal. And I think that I have a great opportunity to do that if I don't get ahead of myself."

And that kind of seasoned perspective isn't often heard from someone of his generation. "I'm a God-fearing man," he says. "I love simple things. I love simplicity in songs because I love simplicity in life. But I'm also very deep, which is weird. I'm a thinker. And I go so deep, a lot of times I just confuse myself and get frustrated, but when I come home and my dog runs and jumps up on my lap, that does something to my spirit. I love to hunt and fish. I love the outdoors. I love my family. I try to live pretty morally square. Pretty clean guy. I've got my problems, but I try to stay pretty straight."

Perhaps the best expression of how Mo Pitney has created his own definition of country music success is found in "Behind This Guitar," a song by Don Sampson and Phil O'Donnell that may not even make the album. "People tell me I can't cut it because the chorus says, 'Behind this guitar there's just a boy who had a dream in his heart, behind this guitar there's just a guy that can't believe he got this far.' And they point out that I haven't gotten anywhere yet, so save it for the second album. But I remember sitting on my bed with the dream of just making music the rest of my life. It wasn't that I had to be on radio or even make a living doing it. I just loved music. Now I'm on the Opry. I have a record deal. And I'm loving the music that I'm making. I can't believe I got this far!"



The daughter of country legend Mel Tillis, **Pam Tillis** made her own way in the music business, eventually becoming a contemporary country star in the 1990s. Tillis was born on July 24, 1957, in Plant City, Florida, but was raised mostly in Nashville and started taking piano lessons at age eight. She switched to guitar at twelve and played in talent contests during her teenage years. Somewhat wild and rebellious, she survived a near-fatal car crash at age sixteen that required extensive facial reconstruction. Fortunately, she recovered fully and pursued music aggressively at the University of Tennessee, singing with the High Country Swing Band (which played country-rock and jug band music) and in a folk duo with Ashley Cleveland. She quit school in 1976 and worked at her father's publishing company, placing her composition "I'll Meet You on the Other Side of the Morning" with Barbara Fairchild. She also formed her own backing band, which soon relocated to the San Francisco Bay Area and renamed themselves Freelight; they developed an adventurous style based on jazz and rock, not country. Tillis returned to Nashville in 1979, though, and sang backup for her father while raising her first child as a single parent, fronting an R&B band, and continuing to write songs, a couple of which were recorded by Gloria Gaynor and Chaka Khan.

Tillis performed regularly at Nashville's Bluebird Cafe with several other female singer/songwriters and landed a deal with Warner Brothers in the early 1980s. She released one album, the pop-oriented *Above and Beyond the Doll of Cutey*, in 1983 and had her first chart single the following year with "Goodbye Highway." Several more singles were released through 1987, but none even managed to make the Top 50; even so, Tillis was making her name as a songwriter for Tree Publishing, with compositions recorded by Highway 101 and Conway Twitty, among others. In 1989, the same year she acted in a Tennessee production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, she landed a new deal with Arista. Tillis released her label debut, *Put Yourself in My Place*, in 1991, and the lead single, "Don't Tell Me What to Do," raced into the Top Five, giving Tillis her long-awaited breakthrough. Of the album's five total singles, "One of Those Things" and "Maybe It Was Memphis" also made the Top Ten (as did the album). 1992's *Homeward Looking Angel* was an equally successful follow-up, with "Shake the Sugar Tree" and "Let That Pony Run" both making the Top Five.

Tillis co-produced her third Arista album, 1994's *Sweetheart's Dance*, which proved to be her most successful yet and earned her the ACM's award for Female Vocalist of the Year. "Spilled Perfume," "When You Walk in the Room," and "In Between Dances" all reached the Top Five, and "Mi Vida Loca (My Crazy Life)" became her first ever number one hit. Released in late 1995, *All of This Love* was the first album Tillis produced by herself, and gave her Top Tens in "Deep Down" and "The River and the Highway." Two new songs from 1997's *Greatest Hits* compilation, "All the Good Ones Are Gone" and "Land of the Living," both went Top Five as well. 1998's *Every Time* reflected her recent divorce from songwriter Bob DiPiero and gave her a near-Top Ten hit in "I Said a Prayer." A reshuffling at Arista delayed the release of *Thunder and Roses* until 2001, so in the meantime Tillis performed on Broadway in the Leiber & Stoller tribute production *Smokey Joe's Cafe*. *Thunder and Roses* found Tillis' commercial momentum slowing down, and she and Arista subsequently parted ways. She caught on at Epic's roots subsidiary Lucky Dog and debuted for them in 2002 with *It's All Relative: Tillis Sings Tillis*, a collection of her father's material that finally found her embracing his legacy on her own terms. *Rhinestoned* appeared in 2007 from Stellar Cat Records.

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Katherine Chi, Aleksandar Madžar, Winston Choi,
MingHuan Xu, James Donahue, and Cameron Kirkpatrick
perform works by Stockhausen and Carter
Coolidge Auditorium (Tickets Required)

Pre-Concert Conversation – 6:30 pm

Paul Miller, PhD, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Music Theory,
Visiting Faculty, Cornell University
Whittall Pavilion (No Tickets Required)

Saturday, April 25, 2015 – 2:00 pm

JORY VINIKOUR, harpsichord

Works by J.S. Bach and Hadel
Coolidge Auditorium (Tickets Required)

Saturday, May 2, 2015 – 2:00 pm

TWO THOUSAND FLUTES

Lorna McGhee, flute; Ryo Yanagitani, piano;
Carol Lynn Ward Bamford, Music Division
Coolidge Auditorium (Tickets Required)

Saturday, May 9, 2015 – 11:00 am

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Nicholas Alexander Brown, Music Division
Jefferson Studio, LJ-G32 (Tickets Required)

Saturday, May 16, 2015 – 11:00 am

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Inside the Minds of Theatrical Directors & Designers
Solomon HaileSelassie, Music Division
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