

Virginia Arts Festival Partners with North Shore Point House Concerts *An intimate house concert series featuring contemporary singer/songwriters*

The Black Lillies - September 9 & Karla Bonoff - September 16

Following a show at North Shore Point House Concerts in Jim Morrison's Norfolk backyard a few years ago, the late Jimmy LaFave and his band encouraged the crowd in a sing along of the classic, "Get Together," then lingered to talk with fans and sign autographs, as performers always do.

"You've got a special thing going on here," one band member said to Morrison as he shared stories.

That wasn't news to fans of the series, many of whom come to every show. For them, house concerts are the best way to connect with their favorite artists and discover new ones.

Music fans began hosting house concerts about 20 years ago, and after writing an article about them Morrison started hosting his own. For fans, they are about becoming a part of a community, meeting people with a shared interest in music and maybe beer and wine and conversation. They're about the thrill of discovery, trusting the host to discover a new voice worth hearing. They're about intimacy, an opportunity to break down the barrier between artist and audience. They are often the only chance to see a sought-after songwriter in a town.

Over 16 years of shows, the series has hosted artists ranging from Grammy winner Dave Alvin, a founder of the legendary rock band The Blasters, to Aoife O'Donovan, a new folk favorite and Prairie Home Companion regular. Over that time, North Shore Point House Concerts has become one of the premier series in the country.

Now, The Virginia Arts Festival is partnering with North Shore Point to bring those intimate shows to downtown Norfolk venues including the Festival's courtyard and the Robin Hixon Theater.

"I'm a big fan of Jim's house concerts," says Virginia Arts Festival Director Rob Cross. "The focus on artistry and the listener experience dovetails beautifully with our mission, and these shows are a welcome addition to the Virginia Arts Festival calendar."

The first shows of the collaboration will be alt country band **The Black Lillies, September 9** in the Virginia Arts Festival Courtyard; and pop hit songwriter **Karla Bonoff, September 16** in the Festival's Robin Hixon Theater. Both venues are located at 440 Bank St., Norfolk. Additional future co-presented concerts are being planned for Virginia Arts Festival spaces.

The Black Lillies, fronted by songwriter Cruz Contreras, have topped the Americana charts. Their most recent album, *Hard to Please*, earned raves from Rolling Stone and NPR, along with a slot on Billboard's Top Country Albums.

Karla Bonoff's career has spanned more than three decades, winning fans with songs like "I Can't Go On," "Personally," and "Tell Me Why." Linda Ronstadt, Wynonna Judd, Aaron Neville, and Bonnie Raitt have recorded her songs.

Both performances begin at 8pm. For tickets and additional information, visit www.northshorepoint.com or www.vafest.org.

About North Shore Point House Concerts

North Shore Point House Concerts is a nonprofit and one of the premier house concert series in the country. The community of listeners are based in Norfolk, VA. Over 16 years, the series has featured Gary Louris of The Jayhawks, Chuck Prophet, Alejandro Escovedo, The Secret Sisters, Della Mae, The Black Lillies, Steve Forbert, Jimmy LaFave, Kevin Welch, Marshall Crenshaw, Lloyd Cole, Eliza Gilkyson, Kim Richey, Dave Alvin, Aoife O'Donovan, Chris Smither, Mary Gauthier, Peter Case, Jim Lauderdale, Tom Russell, and dozens of others. For more about the series, visit www.northshorepoint.com or follow the series Facebook page @northshorepoint.

About Virginia Arts Festival

Since 1997, the **Virginia Arts Festival** has transformed the cultural scene in southeastern Virginia, presenting great performers from around the world to local audiences and making this historic, recreation-rich region a cultural destination for visitors from across the United States and around the world. The Festival has presented numerous U.S. and regional premieres, and regularly commissions new works of music, dance, and theater from some of today's most influential composers, choreographers and playwrights. The Festival's arts education programs reach tens of thousands of area schoolchildren each year through student matinees, in-school performances, artists' residencies, master classes and demonstrations.

Media Contact:

Alli Focke

Virginia Arts Festival

afocke@vafest.org

757-282-2804

Photos, video: <https://www.vafest.org/press-room/>

Jim Morrison

North Shore Point House Concerts

jim@northshorepoint.com

757-451-2441

<https://www.facebook.com/northshorepoint/>

www.northshorepoint.com