

## **Your show of shows with Morning and Jim Nichols and friends**

**By Jean Bartlett**

**Arts Correspondent**

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You can expect an intimate, glowing midnight vocal style when Morning Nichols takes to the stage. Her husband Jim Nichols is the Chet Atkins-style guitarist that makes them whistle their cheers from New York to Nashville and all the way to that great coastal city called Pacifica. (Note Atkins was a friend and a fan.) Morning and Jim are playing their hometown, Saturday night at Pacifica Performances and just to stir up the crowd even more, they've invited a few friends to climb onboard their stage.

There's drummer David Rokeach. He's the Bay Area drummer that has hit the road playing for such greats as: Aretha Franklin, Patti Labelle, Linda Tillery, Steve Miller and the late Ray Charles. There is also Grammy-nominated bassist and composer Michael Manring who worked as the house bassist for Windham Hill Records and who has received world-wide recognition for his ability to present the electric bass somewhat like a pedal steel guitar. He can also play more than one bass at a time.

Vocalist Nate Pruitt, who once was under the tutelage of Carmen McRae, has been called the finest jazz scatting vocalist on the West Coast – and from personal listening experience, that's not stretching a compliment.

Their show is called "Friends and Favorites." Jim Nichols explained how this all-star cast came together.

"Morning and I thought about who is lots of fun to play with, is versatile and plays great and would put on an interesting show," said Jim. "Nate Pruitt has such a good voice and he blends well with Morning. We have all played together in different situations and it has always been really good musically and personally. These musicians are excellent at what they do and we know what to expect from each other so we are really able to work as a team. In addition, I think Dave Rokeach continues to play with us mostly because he needs the money and I can fix his car for free once in a while!"

Interviewed separately and unaware of Jim's comments, Rokeach had this to say about the upcoming gig. "I'm really looking forward to the gig because I know the music will be fantastic and I'm hoping Jim can repair my trap case!"

Apparently there was a gig incident in Germany. "When we recorded in Germany, we brought Dave over to play drums and he was pretty tired after an eleven hour flight and time change," said Morning. "Dave was met by the studio owner at the airport and for some reason the owner thought Dave would like to watch the May Day parade! This was probably the last thing Dave wanted to do as he could barely keep his eyes open. He fell asleep in the car and was eventually delivered to our hotel to get some rest. But wait, it gets worse. When we finally saw him with his drum set, he had duct tap reinforcing his trap case and Jim, helpfully, almost severed one of the leather straps with his Swiss army knife."

The drummer added another vignette regarding his adventures with Morning and Jim Nichols.

"I had been playing at the Sanchez with Calvin Keyes and on the way home, I was pulled over by the Pacifica police because my license plate light was out," said Rokeach. "The next time I played the Sanchez was with Morning and Jim. I told them my story about being pulled over for the broken light and Jim asked had I fixed it? And no, I hadn't. So Jim ran out to the van and he actually had a bulb that fit perfectly in my license plate and I didn't get pulled over again!"

Rokeach who has been playing drums since age 7, enjoys every gig with the Nichols. "I think they are hilarious and they are great people and musicians and I enjoy hanging out with them as much as I like playing with them."

The Saturday night quintet will play a variety of music which includes: jazz, Latin, blues, a funky groove or two, a Brazilian street samba (featuring drummer Rokeach) and of course, nice representations of Chet Atkins fingerpicking. Morning and Nate will sing separately and together and the guitar, bass and drums will all be spotlighted.

"I will not sing under any circumstances," said Jim. "Unless there is a need to empty the room in under one minute!"

These Saturday night musicians are people who are fun and warm and full of energy. In addition, these world class virtuosic musicians absolutely love what they do for a living.

"This will be a serious concert with some, hopefully, amusing patter between songs; mostly to give me time to tune my guitar," said Jim. "Hey, even Segovia had to tune his guitar once in awhile!"

**If you go:**

**Where:** Pacifica Performances Sanchez Concert Hall, 1220 Linda Mar Blvd.

**When:** Saturday, June 7 at 7:30 pm. Doors open 30 minutes before show

**Tickets:** \$20 general, \$15 seniors/students/members, \$12 senior or student members, free under 18

**Contact:** call 650-355-1882 or email [info@pacificaperformances.org](mailto:info@pacificaperformances.org).