

going out

Classic country in the Capital

Songwriter made sure every detail was authentic

By KIM MANNIX VERMETTE for Metro Ottawa

Profile WHEN IT COMES to putting on a good show, Pat Moore isn't afraid to get her hands dirty.

The local singer-songwriter, known for both her engaging folk tunes and her heartfelt country songs, has

been working extra hard recently, travelling to museums and farms to gather props, and making sure every detail of her latest show looks authentic.

The aptly named Ottawa Opry is a theatrical concert

that's an homage to country pop of the 1950s and 1960s, and a tribute to the famed Grande Ole Opry.

"I decided I wanted to really make this fun and theatre like, so in a way it's as much a play as it is a concert," says Moore, taking a break from painting a fence that will grace the "Opry" stage at Library and Archives Canada on Sunday.

« *Basically I've done everything from create and hammer out the idea, to hammering in the actual nails.* »

Pat Moore, singer-songwriter

hammering in the actual nails," she adds with a laugh.

The idea for the show came out of Moore's passion for the country pop music of old, which she captured with last year's

details

» Ottawa Opry takes over the Library and Archives Canada Auditorium, Sunday at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the Ottawa Folklore Centre or CD Warehouse locations.

album *Take It To Heart*. The album featured both original songs in the country pop style, as well as classic covers, given new life thanks to Moore's voice and the talents of her backing band, The Vinyl Frontier.

Moore says she appreciates the musical style for its simplicity and emotion. "It leaves lots of room for suggestion and melodic interpretations," she says of the classic genre. "I've also often had people tell me I sound a lot like Patsy Cline, and I don't want to be another Patsy Cline, but that style is special to me and I love singing it."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Pat Moore and her band The Vinyl Frontier will headline the Ottawa Opry at Library and Archives Canada Sunday afternoon — a tribute to country shows of old, that Moore organized as a fundraiser for Amnesty International.

But it's not all about the music. Moore said she's always been impressed by the kind of concert that runs more like theatre. Smoothly, and with a lot of spectacle. Polished, but not with so much flash there isn't room to appreciate the music.

There to lend her and The Vinyl Frontier a hand will be Neville Wells — a

legend in the Ottawa Valley, entertaining duo Ball and Chain, and popular "punk grass" singer Luther Wright, accompanied by Dan Whiteley.

Moore also planned the event as a way to raise money for Amnesty International, and profits from the show will support what she believes is "such important work for peace, justice

and freedom around the world."

If all goes well, Moore hopes it will be more than a one-time hootenanny.

"If this is well-attended, and if people enjoy it as much as I think they will, it would be great to make this an annual event. And there are certainly enough talented bands in the area to make that possible."

Show Tune Showdown draws in musical audiences

Viewers vote, pitch in on singers' feud

I will admit that musical theatre is not usually my thing, but even I can concede that a good show tune, sung well and with conviction, rarely fails to entertain.

If I needed convincing, I need look no further than Show Tune Showdown, the annual fundraiser for Tone Cluster choir that — according to organizers — blends "Canadian Idol, Name That Tune and Family Feud, all with the glitter of Broadway thrown in."

For the third year, three local theatre groups will compete in a battle of Broadway prowess, singing for celebrity judges and an audience, with the goal of winning \$500 and the coveted title of Show Tune Showdown champion.

Returning champs Zucchini Grotto Theatre Company, will take on Sock 'n' Buskin Theatre Company, and Suzart Productions.

"We're excited to be involved



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because it's fun, a great challenge and we get bragging rights if we win. Or I should say when we win," says Suzart's executive producer, Elaine McCausland.

details

» Show Tune Showdown runs Saturday at the Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue. The show begins at 8 p.m. and tickets are \$20 at the door.

valry."

Suzart's mandate is to provide affordable family-friendly musical theatre, and involve youth as much as possible. There are ac-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Caroline Stevens, left, Paul Grant, Kathleen Arbour, and Kraig-Paul Proulx will represent Suzart productions at the third Show Tune Showdown, running Saturday at the Bronson Centre.

tors from the ages of eight to 85 in the company, and the four members competing Saturday — Caroline Stevens, Paul Grant, Kathleen Arbour, and Kraig-Paul Proulx — are young and eager to

take the title from their pals at Zucchini Grotto.

In order to do that they, and the other teams, must perform four songs for judges Kathleen Petty, James Caswell and Alex

« *Study up on your show tune trivia because you might end up onstage delivering your own musical number.* »

Jessica Ruano, showdown fan

Munter, as well as show off their skills in the difficult Showdown round.

What makes it especially thrilling is that team members must perform a song cold, with no prep time, and if none are brave enough to give it shot, there are always eager audience members willing to fill in. The audience members can then award the points to any team.

Longtime showdown fan and theatre aficionado Jessica Ruano offers this advice to first-time audience members with a hunger to sing: "Study up on your show tune trivia because you might end up onstage delivering your own musical number."

After covering hard news for a few years, Kim discovered her real passion — writing about the wonderful world of music, theatre, visual arts and literature.