

Orpheus Is Reborn

Thirty-seven years ago, the original "Orpheus" band was born. "Orpheus Reborn" debuted last Saturday, featuring South Bostonians Bob Dunlap (guitar) and Kathi Taylor (drums), along with four of the original Orpheus members.

by Rick Winterson

Last Saturday and Sunday were the Scituate Heritage Days, an annual music festival held each August. The acts have ranged from local bands to The Animals, and this year, the Jefferson Starship played on Sunday.

One of the high points of the concert on Saturday was the debut of "Orpheus Reborn". The original "Orpheus" was formed in the late sixties and played until 1972. Orpheus had several hit singles, particularly their signature tune, "Can't Find the Time", which was covered by Hootie and the Blowfish in the feature film, "Me, Myself, and Irene". They have shared the stage to sold-out houses with such names as Janis Joplin, the Who, and Cream, to name a few.

Last year, four of the Orpheus members got together, almost on the spur of the moment, and performed at the Scituate Heritage Days 2004 concert. They decided to continue to perform, but this meant changing their style from the

softer rock prevalent during the sixties and early seventies. They morphed into a grittier rock style with more than a touch of country, while still using many of the songs they wrote and popularized back then.

Most important, they expanded the band to include two well-known South Boston musicians - Bob Dunlap, lead guitar and vocals, and Kathi Taylor, percussion and vocals. The four members from the original Orpheus are Harry Sandler (drums), Jack McKennes (guitar), Steve Martin (guitar, harmonica), and Eric Gulliksen, also called "Snake" (bass). Together, the six of them have adopted the name "Orpheus Reborn".

There were perhaps a thousand people gathered in Scituate Center for the concert, which was at the end of a long row of tents set up in county fair style. The odor of sausages and fried dough was nearly overpowering, but Mother Nature cooperated by providing a sunny, breezy day.

The Orpheus Reborn musicians are all accomplished instrumentalists, from the wailing of Martin's harmonica to the solo capabilities Gulliksen showed on his bass. No one from South Boston has to be told of Bob Dunlap's and Kathi Taylor's talents on guitar and percussion. They took Scituate Center, the middle of the Irish Riviera that now extends down to Green



"Orpheus Reborn" begins their set - (l. to r.) Eric Gulliksen, Steve Martin, Harry Sandler, Jack McKennes, Bob Dunlap, and Kathi Taylor.



Harry Sandler belts out "All Time Antique Store". Kathi Taylor (rear) is on drums; Bob Dunlap (r.) plays lead guitar.

Harbor, by storm. Orpheus Reborn's best feature is their six-part vocals. The most versatile musical instrument is still the human voice. With six of them harmonizing together, the variations are endless. In guru Harry Sandler's words, "Hey, we're basically a song band."

And Orpheus Reborn all had fun - even more fun than the audience, if that was possible. They wore different socks - black, white, gray, none, and even a pair of argyles was rumored. These must have been worn by Snake

Gulliksen, since his cuffs came down over his shoes and hid his socks. Their voices were a much better match.

It is confirmed that Orpheus Reborn will play at the upcoming Street Festival here in South Boston. Look for them on Saturday afternoon, September 10, at one of the two stages along East Broadway. And meanwhile, anticipate!

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