**COUPLES COME TO THE CABARET**

**IN SALEM**

SALEM, NY -- Classic country tribute musicians, The Whiskey River Band, open Fort Salem Theater's Mainstage summer season with a concert on Saturday, June 16 at 7 PM.

On Saturday, June 23, at 8 PM and Sunday, June 24, at 2 PM, the Cabaret at Fort Salem Theater begins its summer of events with *Couples: A Cabaret,* featuring two married couples, Carmen Borgia and Alison Davy, who now live in Catskill after years of living in New York City, and Jay and Lynne Kerr, mom-and-pop owners of Fort Salem, who live in Hebron after years of living in New York City.

"Carmen and Alison left the city willingly, to find peace and joy in the country," Mr. Kerr offered in a recent interview. "Lynne and I were drummed out." "Drums. Always musical," his wife, Lynne, retorts. "In fact, *he* was drummed out and I had to follow when our lease ran out."

The two couples met when Ms. Davy and Mr. Kerr were cast last year in a production of *Souvenir* at Catskill's Bridge Street Theater, which later played at The Fort. Davy portrayed the tone-deaf classical singer Florence Foster Jenkins and Kerr, her long suffering accompanist, Cosmé McMoon.

"We had fun," he says. "*You* had fun," offers Davy. She is corrected by her husband, Mr. Borgia. "They *both* had fun. I know. I had to watch each performance and a whole lot of rehearsals." Borgia was sound engineer for both venues, and had to wire each actor for sound before they were fully costumed. In his musical life, Borgia is a songwriter whose instrument of choice is the ukulele. "Other than Don Ho, there wasn't much competition," he jokes, "and I've had pretty much a free ride since he died eleven years ago."

*Couples: A Cabaret* derives its driving energy from the clever attempts of carping between spouses and couples. When the performers are not trying to top one another, they display their considerable talents in song. Alison Davy loved musical theater in her early teens, but later pursued and achieved bachelor's and master's degrees in classical music. She has sung at Lincoln Center, the White House, and extensively in Europe. In the cabaret, she will be singing an art song written for voice and piano, only with her husband's uke accompaniment. Carmen Borgia sings a few classic uke songs (yes, there are some), and an original song for which he penned music and lyrics, "I Don't Want to Make My Dreams Come True."

"We just discovered that Carmen and I have a credit in common," Lynne Kerr said. "We each appeared on *The Uncle Floyd Show* in our youth," referring to comic Floyd Vivino's cult classic cable show that ran locally in New Jersey and for a time nationally in syndication, which also featured Peter Tork (of *The Monkees),* Jan and Dean, Cyndi Lauper, and Bon Jovi. Mrs. Kerr's credits range from Carnegie Hall ("I was in a huge group") to Manhattan cabaret in such renowned venues as The Village Gate ("That I did solo"). "Though I'm usually booked in Salem singing songs my husband wrote, in the show he's letting me sing some that people may have heard before."

"OK, sure, but I thought that this was a great opportunity to present accomplished musicians performing material unfamiliar to them and their audiences," Jay Kerr said. A musical theater writer, composer, and arranger, whose work has been represented on Broadway, on CD, and extensively at Fort Salem, he conceived a show where these two married couples actually can be six couples, by musically exchanging spouses and the males and females each being a couple as well. "It sounds naughtier than it is," he says, "by design." The men sing an Al Jolson song together, the gals sing two touching Broadway duets, Borgia and Mrs. Kerr sing classic bossa nova, and Davy and Mr. Kerr belt out a number written in 1927. "When Jay was a teenager," notes the younger Ms. Davy, somewhat inaccurately.

*Couples: A Cabaret,* has limited seating, so reservations are stongly encouraged. The ticket price of $20 includes coffee and tea. More information is available on the theater's website (*fortsalemtheater.com*) and tickets can be ordered by calling the theater box office at (518) 854-9200.