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Notes from editor (not for publication):

Nice job, Sheryl. I really love your writing. —Jeff



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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¹ Going solo

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² Alec Ounsworth, the driving force behind the indie rock
³ band Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, will take the Stone Church stage
⁴ alone

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⁵ TEXT BODY:

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⁶ WHEN CLAP YOUR HANDS SAY YEAH performs at the Stone
⁷ Church in Brattleboro this Friday, Jan. 16, at 8 p.m., it will be a
⁸ different experience from last year's full band tour that celebrated
⁹ the 20th anniversary of their debut album.

10 This time Alec Ounsworth, the driving force behind the
11 indie rock band, will take the stage alone to play a stripped-down
12 piano and voice show.

13 Since 2014, Ounsworth has performed both solo and
14 with Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, a name he was inspired to use
15 after seeing it scrawled on a wall in Brooklyn.

16 Although most know the Philadelphia-based musician
17 from his work with the band, playing solo is something he's quite
18 comfortable with; he notes that he's done many solo tours over
19 the years, and he even includes a solo segment when playing
20 with the band.

21 * * *

22 OUNSWORTH'S UPCOMING TOUR follows his 2024
23 European tour, during which he accompanied himself on piano
24 for the first time, rather than his usual instrument, the guitar. His
25 piano playing had surfaced in his work on stage and on record,
26 but not during the solo tours.

27 "The piano rearrangement started during the pandemic,
28 where I was asked to play livestream shows," he recently said. "I
29 had played a few livestream shows on guitar and thought they
30 sounded like garbage through the computer. So I rearranged,
31 more or less, all of my songs for piano, which is my first
32 instrument. So something personally positive had come from the
33 pandemic, I guess."

34 Ounsworth found that he enjoys the piano's versatility.

35 "It's more challenging, but when everything comes
36 together, it feels magical," he explained.

37 These stripped-down shows, featuring reworked songs in
38 small venues, were a hit and showcased his songwriting skills. A
39 four-song *Piano & Voice* EP that Ounsworth recorded on this tour
40 has also been released.

41 * * *

42 A U.S. TOUR had to wait because 2025 marked the 20th
43 anniversary of Clap Your Hands Say Yeah's self-titled debut
44 album.

45 When the band released its debut disc in 2005, no one,
46 including Ounsworth, expected the reaction it got. He was
47 hesitant to release it, worrying it was not good enough, but
48 eventually put it out independently, without any promotion or
49 support from a label.

50 But the strong songwriting, along with the buzzy synths,
51 shimmering guitars, and Ounsworth's unique vocals, resonated
52 with listeners, who began sharing their love for the album on
53 Internet music blogs at a time when generating buzz online was a
54 relatively new phenomenon.

55 The critics caught on, and suddenly the band that came
56 out of nowhere was being showered with praise.

57 This kind of immediate success can be tough, but Clap
58 Your Hands Say Yeah forged on, and in the years that followed,
59 the band released six albums. Ounsworth also put out a solo
60 album and one with another group, Flashy Python.

61 The Clap Your Hands Say Yeah debut remained a fan
62 favorite and is considered a landmark album, brilliantly capturing
63 the independent music scene of the early 2000s. So to celebrate
64 its 20th anniversary, the band put out a deluxe reissue and
65 launched a massive world tour that Ounsworth said was fantastic.

66 "I am still very fond of those songs, so I was happy to
67 play the album again in its entirety," he said. "Some of the songs
68 were changed quite a bit, which is normal. Naturally, I believe
69 that everything changes in time one way or another, but if the
70 foundation is solid the changes will always remain very
71 interesting."

72 * * *

73 OUNSWORTH HAS A busy year ahead, working on a new
74 Clap Your Hands Say Yeah album and possibly playing some band
75 shows. He is also writing the score for an upcoming documentary
76 film.

77 But before starting those projects, he decided it was the
78 right time to bring the voice-and-piano tour to the U.S.

79 "Now seemed a good time," he said. "I'm planning the
80 next album and so I wanted to be sure I had the chance to now
81 show this side of the songs to a U.S. and Canadian audience
82 before I get overwhelmed with everything else."

83 He looks forward to the tour, which will begin in Boston
84 on Jan. 15 and will run through the end of February. Ounsworth
85 is looking forward to playing small venues, as the solo piano
86 format allows him to connect through his songs to the audience
87 in a new and intimate way.

88 He is also excited to visit Brattleboro for the first time
89 and to play at the Stone Church, a venue he said has attracted
90 him from photos he has seen posted online.

91 I asked Ounsworth if touring the debut album last year
92 impacted the songs he picked for this tour, but he said it didn't.

93 "I generally choose songs that I feel closest to at a given
94 time and see if I can make them stand up in a new arrangement,"
95 he said. "It's a challenge, but very liberating."

96 He went on to say that the upcoming show on Friday will
97 feature a mix of his solo material as well as songs by his band.

98 "It will mostly be Clap Your Hands, but maybe some
99 from [his solo album] *Mo Beauty* and *Flashy Python* too," he
100 said. "I have some covers that are lined up and have been
101 practicing this set every day for a little while now. These songs
102 have started feeling very unifying and hopeful."

103 * * *

104 *Tickets are \$37 for this all ages show and are available at*
105 [*stonechurchvt.com*](http://stonechurchvt.com). *Doors open at 7 p.m.*

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Bio/COATTAIL:

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106 **SHERYL HUNTER** is a freelance writer from
107 Easthampton, Massachusetts. Her work has appeared in various
108 regional and national publications.Â

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