

—Slug:.....COMM-0860.arts.Donnelly_Brokaw
—Contributor.....Sheryl Hunter
—Contributor email.....shunter905@aol.com
—For section.....The Arts
—Format.....News - byline and dateline
—Dateline.....Brattleboro
—Article Number:.....43431



Notes from editor (not for publication):

Note spelling: Hilken Mancini



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 'Medieval music for the modern era'

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2 Alt-rock legends Tanya Donnelly and Chris Brokaw turn
3 back time with 'The Undone is Done Again,' which will be
4 showcased in a April 10 concert at Stone Church

####END SUBHED####

5 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

6 IF YOU ARE A fan of alternative rock, you know the music
7 of Tanya Donnelly and Chris Brokaw. She was the cofounder of
8 Throwing Muses, Belly, and the Breeders. He is best known as the
9 guitarist/singer for the band Come and the drummer for Codeine,
10 and he has collaborated a number of other musicians, including
11 Thurston Moore.

12 Now Donnelly and Brokaw, both of Boston, have teamed
13 up for a new project that reaches further back than their 1980s
14 beginnings. They have recorded *The Undone Is Done Again*, a
15 four-song EP of “medieval music for the modern era.”

16 The EP comes out on Friday, April 17, with a special-
17 edition vinyl available for Record Store Day on Saturday, April
18 18.

19 Before the EP is released, Brokaw and Donnelly will start
20 a four-city tour — called the Madrigals and Guitar Tour as a nod
21 to the style and mood of what they are performing together — at
22 the Stone Church in Brattleboro on Friday, April 10, at 8 p.m.

23 Despite being longtime players on the Boston music
24 scene and admirers of each other’s work, Donnelly and Brokaw
25 had never worked together — that is, until 2024, when Donnelly
26 approached Brokaw about playing together at their mutual friend
27 Hilken Mancini’s annual holiday event.

28 Brokaw agreed and had some thoughts on what they
29 should sing. He had been listening to a Norwegian group,
30 Medieval Trio, after randomly coming across a CD in a record
31 shop. Once he started listening to the group, he became
32 captivated by this old music.

33 “Chris called and said, ‘I’ve been listening to this
34 medieval music and I’m really into it, I think it would be cool to
35 do our interpretation of one of these carols,’” recalled Donnelly.
36 “At the time I was joking when I said, ‘Are you trying to shake me
37 off?’ But then he sent me several pieces, and I just fell in love
38 with the idea.”

39 They chose the song “In Hoc Anni Circulo,” and Donnelly
40 admitted to being nervous going into the show and singing the
41 song, which is in Latin.

42 “I felt like this is just such a blindside in some ways, but
43 when we’re doing it, it feels really natural. I’m not worried about
44 what it is or why we are doing it, it just feels right,” she said.

45 "I know it's going to sound simplistic, but it just feels
46 good to play this music with him," Donnelly continued. "There's
47 something really trance-y and personally satisfying about it."

48 "I don't think people are surprised when Tanya and I do
49 something new and different," said Brokaw about that first show.

50 "I felt like we immediately had a sound that sounded and
51 felt really different from the source that we were drawing from,"
52 he added. "I thought it was really cool and I thought that we
53 should do more of this — and Tanya was really into it."

54 * * *

55 BROKAW AND DONELLY decided to make a record, and it
56 involved extensive online research to find the right material.
57 There was a lot to wade through, as these songs are very old and
58 there are multiple versions out there.

59 Donnelly also wanted to know what the lyrics meant, so
60 she dove into finding translations.

61 "I want to make it clear that I don't speak Latin," Donnelly
62 said with a laugh. "But I didn't want to be singing anything that I
63 can't get behind, as there is some violent religious imagery in
64 some of these songs. I kind of stuck with the more spiritually
65 vague and also made choices on what sounds beautiful, but it did
66 take a while to get them in singable shape."

67 *The Undone Is Done Again*, which showcases the
68 interplay between Donnelly's gorgeous vocals and Brokaw's
69 atmospheric guitar, includes three songs in Latin and another,
70 "Sainte Nicholaes," in Middle English.

71 "We approached each song differently, and I took some
72 liberties with the chord changes," said Brokaw. "I know Tanya
73 took some liberties with some of the melodies, too, so they're
74 definitely our versions of the songs."

75 They decided to include only four songs on the EP
76 because, as Brokaw put it, "it just felt so complete."

77 * * *

78 ALTHOUGH THE MUSIC is very old, Brokaw's inventive
79 guitar playing gives it a fresh sound. The result is beautiful and

80 haunting and unlike anything you've ever heard before. It's
81 impressive how much emotion they express with just guitar and
82 vocals, especially considering we can't understand the lyrics.

83 Donnelly pushes her voice to an entirely new level here.

84 "I've never sung like this before," she said. "But it feels
85 good to do something that is a radical departure. It's very fun."

86 She admitted that 'fun' might seem like an odd word for
87 this project, but Donnelly said she and Brokaw are really enjoying
88 it.

89 "I also want to add there's something so beautiful and
90 freeing about singing phonetically," she said. "I can focus on
91 what Chris is doing and the melody, and not on what I'm saying."

92 * * *

93 NEITHER Brokaw nor Donnelly has performed at Stone
94 Church before, and they are looking forward to debuting the
95 record there.

96 The show will include the four songs from the EP, along
97 with material from throughout their careers. They are also
98 working on new material and are looking forward to playing a
99 couple of these songs as well.

100 Brokaw and Donnelly plan to play some shows in Europe
101 this fall, and Brokaw said he would also like to add more U.S.
102 dates.

103 "I've always heard good things about the Stone Church,
104 so I'm looking forward to playing there," he said. "I am also
105 excited to see Roger," referring to Roger C. Miller, co-founder and
106 guitarist of Mission of Burma, who will be opening the show. "It's
107 going to be a great night."

108 * * *

109 *Tanya Donnelly and Chris Brokaw will perform at the*
110 *Stone Church, 210 Main St., Brattleboro, on Friday, April 10, at 8*
111 *p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m.*

112 *Advance tickets are available for the all-ages show at*
113 stonechurchvt.com.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

114 **SHERYL HUNTER** is a freelance writer from
115 Easthampton, Massachusetts, and has reported extensively on the
116 regional music scene for many years. Her work has appeared in
117 various regional and national publications.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

118 0

####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

####BEGIN LINKS####

119

####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

####BEGIN VIDEO####

120

####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

####BEGIN LOGLINE####

121

####END LOGLINE####