

BIOGRAPHY

"...a mesmerizing voice."
—*San Francisco Examiner*

Sylvia Herold is a singer's singer. At home in folk, swing, pop and Celtic genres, her passion is discovering and sharing the tale a song can tell. Her gift is in presenting songs with a clarity that is both honest and uplifting and yet remains refreshingly unvarnished. Her hard work in researching, performing and recording compelling songs for more than 25 years has earned her accolades from fans and press alike.

In her considerable tenure on the San Francisco Bay Area music scene, she has played and toured with several bands, including Cats & Jammers, The Hot Club of San Francisco, Wake the Dead, Euphonia and the Pop Top Trio. She is also an accomplished recording artist, having released four solo CDs: *The Old Jawbone* (2009), *Lovely Nancy* (2005), *A Mockingbird Sings in California* (2001) and *A Bowl of Crystal Tears* (1997)—all on the Tuxedo Records label—and has appeared on more than 25 albums alongside artists such as Kathy Kallick, Tom Rozum and Laurie Lewis.

In each of the recordings, Herold's style is distinct and identifiable: unaffected vocals married with spare instrumentation that provides unobtrusive support to appealing melodies and the stories they carry. "Songs are intriguing packages to be learned and sung. I find endless pleasure in examining them from different angles searching for hidden treasures."

Traditional Irish/British music was Herold's first love. In the hotbed of San Francisco's music scene, she met and found work playing with many talented Irish musicians. Her most consistent companion on the Irish music scene has been mandolinist and singer Marla Fibish; the well-partnered duo performed at the landmark Plough and Stars pub for 13 years.

In 1986 she began performing in the swing trio Cats & Jammers alongside Piper Heisig on acoustic bass and Tony Marcus on lead guitar, fiddle and sax. The group's intricate vocal arrangements entertained audiences at concerts and music festivals, and they were a fixture on the northern California party and wedding circuit.

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Herold has also performed and recorded with The Hot Club of San Francisco, a band inspired by the music of Django Reinhardt and the Hot Club of France, a European gypsy interpretation of American jazz. Herold played rhythm guitar and sang in this band for five years, and she appears on two of the band's recordings.

Currently, Herold plays with Wake the Dead, the self-described “Celtic All-Star Grateful Dead Jam Band.” The group has won acclaim for its high level of musicianship and its inventive and fun intermingling of the Celtic world with Grateful Dead favorites. Herold appears on all three of the group’s albums, *Blue Light Cheap Hotel*, *Buckdancers Choice* and *Wake the Dead*.

She also records and performs regularly with Euphonia, a café-style acoustic combo featuring harmony vocals and sophisticated musicianship. The group’s two albums—*The Old Jawbone* and *Lovely Nancy*—blend modern and traditional folk songs and dance tunes from the Americas, the British Isles and across Europe.

The Pop Top Trio is yet another active ensemble that Herold performs regularly with. The trio creates unique, lush three-part harmony arrangements of jazz and pop gems from Gershwin to the Bee Gees, from the Rascals to Marvin Gaye, and also Brazilian-tinged originals from musical collaborator Ed Johnson.

Herold has performed at numerous festivals, including the Strawberry Music Festival, the San Francisco Jazz Festival, Centrum Hot Jazz, the Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival and the Sugar Bowl Music Festival. She is a frequent instructor at prestigious adult music camps such as Puget Sound Guitar Workshop, the California Coast Music Camp and Lark in the Morning Music Celebration.

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