

FOLK FESTIVAL:
Concerts feature
award-winning music

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their transcendent live shows, while mining new energetic material from the place where folk music, funk and soul meet.

The band's newest album, "Is It You, Is It Me" — coming January 31 via their own Medium Expectations label and Nashville's Thirty Tigers — is something different entirely and represents the latest stage in a band that never stops evolving and refuses to stand still. The result is a sonic revelation and a reckoning. After celebrating more than a decade of sonic adventuring, playing thousands of shows together in 10 countries and counting, and collecting a devoted and growing fan base coast to coast, the six core members — founder Z. Lupetin, Liz Beebe, Josh Heffernan, Matt Rubin, Ulf Bjorlin and Connor Vance — knew they had to create something bigger.

With a big brass-and-strings band building the sets around them, Is It You, Is It Me isn't afraid to explore the personal and political tension that the group may have shied away from facing before. The group's signature intertwined vocal leads star on the opening track, "Dreaming," which tackles the deep vulnerability of revealing your secrets and your soul every night in front of an audience. But where the band really sets on a new course is on lushly cinematic, orchestrated set pieces like "Mirror," "Runaway" and, most notably, the current fan favorite and live show-stopper "Sonic Boom," about the struggle to reveal who you really are in the hidden, rose-colored world of social media.

On Thursday, April 9, stellar mandolin player Sierra Hull will perform with a full band, demonstrating her wide-ranging and exceptional musical talent as a writer, singer and performer. Hull's stellar career started early. She had her Grand Ole Opry debut at age 10 and was called back to the famed stage a year later to perform with her hero and mentor, Alison Krauss. Sierra played Carnegie Hall at 12; at 13 she signed with Rounder Records and issued her debut, "Secrets," garnering the first of many nominations for the IBMA's Mandolin Player of the Year designation.

She played the Kennedy Center at 16 and the next year became the first bluegrass musician to receive a Presidential Scholarship to the Berklee College of

Music. As a 20-year-old, Hull played the White House and in 2010, captured her first IBMA award for Recorded Event of the Year. All the while, she was shedding the prodigy tag, turning virtuoso, and recording her second album, "Daybreak," with seven of her own original compositions.

By 2016, Hull had reached a more mature place in her life and in her art. She tapped legendary bluegrass musician Béla Fleck to produce her third album, "Weighted Mind." A departure from her opening pair of records that blended progressive elements with traditional structure, Hull let go of whatever preconceptions existed — both hers and those of her audience — and birthed a Grammy-nominated masterpiece. Enlisting bassist Ethan Jodziewicz (and Fleck on two cuts), and harnessing vocal contributions from Krauss, Abigail Washburn, and Rhiannon Giddens, Hull trusted her foundation of influences to support this artistic leap. Months later she was taking home the IBMA Mandolin Player of the Year award.

After a near-decade of consecutive nominations, Hull broke that last glass ceiling, becoming the first woman to win the prestigious title, then she took home a pair to join it, winning again in 2017 and 2018.

Sierra Hull has maintained a rigorous touring schedule. Even when off the road, she is frequently guesting with friends and legends, joining such icons as the Indigo Girls, Garth Brooks, and Gillian Welch, and performing at the Country Music Awards with Ricky Skaggs, Brad Paisley, and Marty Stuart.

She says she's ready now for something new.

Currently in the midst of work for the follow-up to "Weighted Mind," her next album will consist of all original songs. Beyond that, there are compelling ideas she won't divulge for collaborations and, perhaps, an all-instrumental record.

"I love playing music. It's all I ever wanted to do. I don't see it, necessarily, as a bad thing that I'm slow on making albums. I want my albums to be something I can be proud of," said Hull.

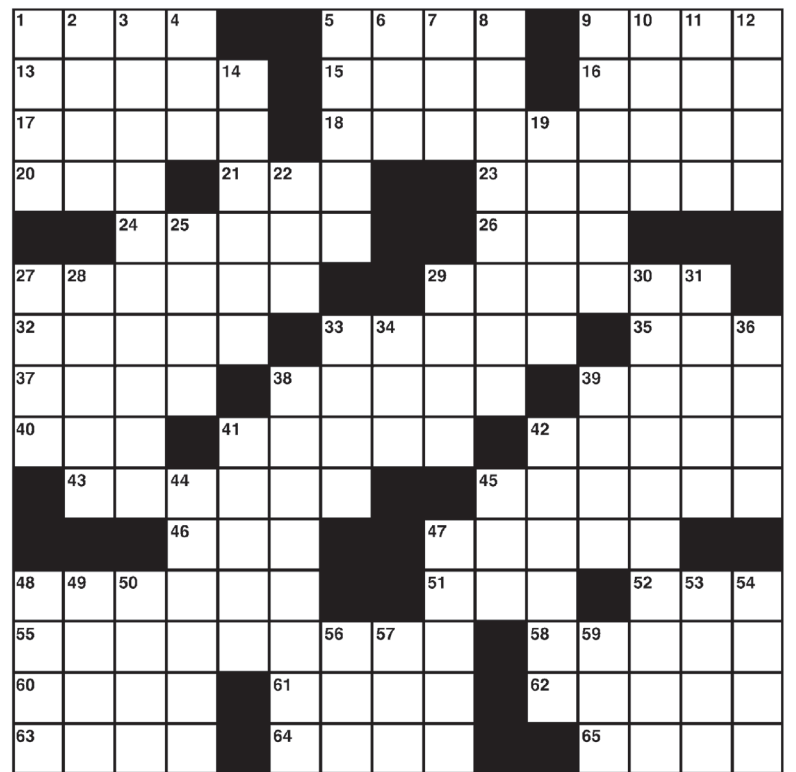
For more information on the 2020 Sisters Folk Festival Winter Concert Series visit www.sistersfolkfestival.org/winterconcertseries. Tickets can be purchased online in advance or at the door. SFF Winter Concert Series season passes are \$55 for adults or \$40 for youth 18 and under. Tickets are also available for individual shows. All shows are at the Sisters High School auditorium and start at 7 p.m.

The Nugget Newspaper Crossword

By Jacqueline E. Mathews, Tribune News Service

- ACROSS**
- 1 Daddy
 - 5 Give off, as fumes
 - 9 Skinny
 - 13 Church volunteer
 - 15 Go suddenly off course
 - 16 Bagel's center
 - 17 One of the Obamas
 - 18 Easy to get along with
 - 20 Jungle beast
 - 21 Rotten
 - 23 Clap cuffs on
 - 24 U.S. state capital
 - 26 "We're off to ___ the Wizard..."
 - 27 Weds without fanfare
 - 29 Univ. of Arizona's location
 - 32 Church ceremonies
 - 33 ___ with; make eyes at
 - 35 Feathery scarf
 - 37 Computer screen symbol
 - 38 Snail's secretion
 - 39 Drain problem
 - 40 One of the Kardashians
 - 41 Highways
 - 42 Self-confidence
 - 43 Business magnate
 - 45 ___ in; intruded
 - 46 Shack
 - 47 Sri ___
 - 48 Cry from one who's fed up
 - 51 Lock, stock ___ barrel
 - 52 Morning hour
 - 55 Egotistical
 - 58 Pueblo brick
 - 60 Boulder
 - 61 Actress Patricia
 - 62 Folks from Belgrade
 - 63 Guitar cousins, for short
 - 64 Entryway
 - 65 Fluid-filled sac

- DOWN**
- 1 Cougar
 - 2 Letters of urgency
 - 3 Blood-drawer's field
 - 4 Start of a vowel list
 - 5 Stay away from
 - 6 Actress Ryan
 - 7 Suffix for mess or sass
 - 8 R.L. Stevenson's "___ Island"
 - 9 Is generous
 - 10 Brain division
 - 11 Woes
 - 12 TV's "___ the Press"
 - 14 Danger from a dog bite
 - 19 Construct
 - 22 Primitive transport
 - 25 Daytime shop window sign
 - 27 Actor Estrada
 - 28 Legal
 - 29 Allen & McGraw
 - 30 Imperative; required
 - 31 Lasso's loop
 - 33 Custard with a caramel glaze
 - 34 "Put a ___ on it!"; cry of annoyance
 - 36 No longer youthful



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

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— Last Week's Puzzle Solved —



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