

SONGWRITING:**Small session is new program for festival***Continued from page 3*

form with an emphasis on lyrics. The weekend retreat will include small group workshops, song circles, opportunities for collaboration, and an instructor concert at Sisters' beautiful listening room, The Belfry, on Saturday night, April 18.

Texas-raised, Oregon-based singer-songwriter Beth Wood has labored in the world of independent music for 23 years, morphing from a young, classically trained, folk-tinged singer-songwriter to a wailing Southern rock band leader to a college-circuit coffeehouse sweetheart to a well-respected nationally touring poet and troubadour. Through all of these incarnations, Wood has remained true to herself and to her artistry; she has done it her way. Out of that fierceness and commitment to her craft comes a canon of work that cannot be denied. Wood's 11 independently released solo albums and one duo album (Stand and Sway) have gained her a fan base that is loyal and true, and her creative work has earned her the prestigious Kerrville Folk Festival New Folk Award and the 2019 Oregon Book Award Peoples' Choice Award for her poetry book *Ladder to the Light*.

Wood has released two books of poetry and one book of silly essays about ridiculous merch table conversations.

Joy is the currency that runs through Beth's work of story and song, and her sensitive, intuitive nature allows her to address both joy and sorrow in a way that resonates and moves audiences and readers.

Wood's work has expanded to include teaching and song coaching as well as leading workshops at festivals, songwriting retreats and beyond. Beth believes that engagement in the process of creation is as important as its outcome, and that there are no wrong notes. She currently

lives in Bend.

Singer, songwriter, entertainer, poet and teacher Tom Kimmel is all of those things and more. In demand as a songwriting teacher and lecturer, Tom offers workshop instruction tying the creative spirit to the nuts and bolts of composition. Tom Kimmel is a unique artist who continues to write, record, entertain and inspire at the highest levels.

For the past 30 years, dozens of Tom's compositions have been recorded by luminary artists including Linda Ronstadt, Johnny Cash, Joe Cocker and Randy Travis. Kimmel's business card facetiously reads *Overnight Success* — because the truth is far from it. After college he worked as a cook, busboy, taxi driver, shipping clerk, lab technician, janitor, bartender and window washer on his way to establishing himself as a writer for film and television. A soulful, funny and inspiring performer in his own right, Tom tours and teaches widely. He's released seven solo albums, published a book of poems, and he's as vibrant and creative as ever in his sixth decade of music-making. A self-described "closet poet" until the publication of his collection *"The Sweetest & the Meanest,"* Kimmel has been a featured writer at book festivals and writing retreats, and his poems have

been published in a number of poetry and literary journals.

Portland-based Anna Tivel reaches for a thread of understanding with her music, that moment of recognition, of shared experience. There are thousands of miles on her touring odometer and each town is a tangled web of heartache and small reasons to believe. She gravitates toward the quiet stories of ordinary life: A homeless veteran sitting on a bench to watch the construction of a luxury hotel; a woman wondering about the life of the daughter she had to give up for adoption; someone changing shape; someone falling in love; someone all alone.

With four full-length albums out on Portland's well-loved Fluff & Gravy Records, Tivel continues to touch on a common human thread. Her newest album, *"The Question,"* was recorded mostly live at Hive studio in Eau Claire, Wisconsin,



PHOTO BY SCOTT HOUSLEY

Tom Kimmel

engineered by the esteemed Brian Joseph (Bon Iver, Sufjan Stevens) and produced by drummer and multi-instrumentalist Shane Leonard. NPR called it "one of the most ambitious folk records of 2019." Her previous release, *"Small Believer,"* was heralded by NPR as "an album that repeatedly achieves this exquisite balance of the quotidian and the sublime."

"Tivel's characters are both common and unforgettable," Ann Powers of NPR writes, "She possesses a genuine poet's sense that words matter more than persona, or a showy performance. Her images linger, and become populated with the energy of the real."

Sisters Songworks is an opportunity to learn from professional singer-songwriters, connect with others who share a love of songwriting and poetry, share work in a non-performance focused setting, and engage in creativity in a supportive environment.

Registration is \$375, and



PHOTO BY MICHELL MCAFEE

Beth Wood.

discounted room rates are available at the GrandStay Hotel & Suites Sisters. The retreat will take place at Sisters Art Works with a "Songworks in the Round" performance featuring Beth Wood, Anna Tivel and Tom Kimmel open to the public at The Belfry on Saturday, April 18. Concert tickets and workshop registration will be available beginning on January 8 at 10 a.m. at www.sistersfolkfestival.eventbrite.com.

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Anna Tivel will teach and perform.