



Vienna Teng
performs at
Café Paradiso
on Wednesday

Rising Stars

Benfield, Teng bring popular sounds to town.

San Francisco Bay-area singer, songwriter and guitarist **Garrin Benfield** will entertain the crowds at Luna jazz club on Friday with his honest, soulful style. Benfield's 2002 release, *Nowhere is Brighter*, contains 16 tracks of Benfield's gently percolating rhythms and poignant outlook.

Benfield was formerly a part of the groove/funk band Maya, which broke up in 2000. For the past couple of years, Benfield has been amassing a following by touring regularly and supporting the release of his first solo effort, *Living A Dream*. That CD gained him national attention for his moving lyrical tribute to murdered teenager Matthew Shepard, a homosexual man who was the victim of a horrendous hate crime.

His current release, *Nowhere*, features musical contributions by members of Bonnie Raitt's and Ani DiFranco's bands, as well as members of Counting Crows. The legendary Boz Scaggs provides a guitar solo on "The Sense That I Get." Other musicians include Jimmy Pugh on organ, Jon Cleary on piano and Ricky Fataar on drums.

Locals Erik Muiderman and Justin King will open for Benfield.

What's this, a music festival in Springfield? That's right, the **Fiesta de la Independencia Mexicana** is the first large-scale Fiesta to ever take place in Springfield. This fun-filled family event is all set to open at noon Saturday, Sept. 13 in the Springfield Museum parking lot at 6th and Main.

Independence Day in Mexico is an especially noteworthy day; this festival is set to honor the commemoration of Mexico's first proclamation of independence from Spain in 1810. (Though actual independence was not won for 10 more years, the rebellion began that year and is culturally significant.)

The afternoon includes dance, music, food, piñatas and crafts for children. A flag ceremony will be presided over by Consul

General Martha Ortiz de Rosa. Two highlights of the musical offerings (which will continue all afternoon) are **Ballet Folclorica Azteca** at 1 pm, followed by seven-member mariachi band **Mariachi Los Gallos**.

Have you heard of **Vienna Teng**? Yes, that was her you heard give an impassioned performance on the "David Letterman Show." Less than six months after leaving her highly paid job as a software engineer in San Francisco to become a full-time musician, she made her network television debut and has been turning heads and ears ever since.

Though it might seem a sudden shift to go from cubicle worker to traveling troubadour, Teng has actually been immersed in music her whole life, since she began studying classical piano at age 5. The prodigy wrote her first song at age 6 and composed enough instrumentals to fill an entire album by age 16. She performed impromptu concerts while attending Stanford, and realized that the audiences found value in her work.

She continued to perform in coffee houses and the like after graduation, but never released a CD. She finally released *Waking Hour*, then signed with independent label Virt Records. Virt released another version of *Waking Hour* (featuring guest spots by Will Kimbrough and Steve Earle's Craig Wright), and Teng caught the attention of the folks at NPR's radio program "Weekend Edition." Teng is an intriguing performer, vocalist and composer, and her work ranges from gentle piano ballads to multi-layered productions.

The musical world is welcoming Teng with open arms, as exemplified by the use of one of her songs, "The Tower" on an episode of the TV program "Ed." She is currently Tower Records' artist of the month, and she has also been featured on CNN. Find out what everyone else has already discovered, as Teng, who performed in Eugene last May, returns to Café Paradiso on Wednesday. **EW**

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