

Remembering the light

Folksinger John Gorka returns to Astoria to play benefit concert for Coast Community Radio on Jan. 17

By RYAN HUME
FOR COAST WEEKEND

On the heels of his latest album, *True in Time*, folk mainstay John Gorka takes the stage at the Performing Arts Center in Astoria at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 17. This solo acoustic performance is a benefit concert for Coast Community Radio.

The host of KMUN radio show *Friday Folk*, Albert Smith, who helped organize the concert and has seen Gorka many times, is excited for the evening.

"I've been a programmer on KMUN since the early '90s and can say in honesty that I've played John since day one," Smith said. "Over that time he's created a library of music that informs us, in a way, with humor as well as humility. His ability to tell stories might bring a smile or a tear, but always the human condition."

Coast Weekend spoke with Gorka from his home outside of St. Paul, Minnesota, where he has lived with his wife and two kids for about 23 years — the longest the baritone-voiced balladeer has ever settled down in one spot. This conversation has been lightly edited for length and clarity.

Coast Weekend: The

show you'll be playing in Astoria is a benefit for KMUN Coast Community Radio. What does public or community radio mean to you?

John Gorka: It's pretty crucial. The acoustic or folk people don't get a whole lot of commercial radio air play, so community radio, public radio are the main places. I guess now, more and more, internet radio is the way we — or at least I — get any air play. There are a few commercial stations, but there's not very many.

IF YOU GO

John Gorka live in concert

A benefit for Coast Community Radio

When: 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 17

Where: Performing Arts Center, 588 16th St., Astoria

Tickets: \$20
and available at
LibertyAstoria.org

Look, any form of music that isn't super-popular, it runs on venues that like the music and want to bring it to their town, not because they're going to make a lot of money from the shows. It's a lot volunteers and people giving up their time and effort to bring music to town and put it on the radio.

CW: Do you know how this show got set up?

JG: I don't know, but



Photo illustration by
Joe del Tufo/Moonloop
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John Gorka.