

# JO SERRAPERRE & THE WILLIE DUNNS

www.joserrapere.com

## BIOGRAPHY

Jo Serrapere (sarah-pear), a songwriter from Detroit, Michigan, started playing guitar at 23 when seeking out lessons from Delta Blues guitarist, Shari Kane. Shortly thereafter, Jo began writing her own songs while completing her college studies in clinical psychology. She now plays at music venues throughout the United States.

Whether recreating old songs from the Mississippi Delta or performing songs in her own confessional style, Jo's music stands original while always reflecting her love of



American roots music. Her eclectic writing and performance fuses elements of various modern and traditional folk music, old-time and electric blues, roots rock, garage surf, swing, hot jazz and alt-country.

Jo's band, the Willie Dunns (John Devine, Jef Reynolds and Stuart Tucker) brings added depth and musical styling to Jo's original songs as well as classics from such artists as Mississippi John Hurt, Bessie Smith and Tom Waits. Jo is also the founding member of the old-time group Uncle Earl.

## RESUME

- Jo and WDs have **performed twice on NPR's live radio program, A Prairie Home Companion with Garrison Keillor** in December, 2001 and May, 2002.
- In 2007 Jo was featured on the Sirius Satellite Radio Program, **Kick Out the Jams** with Dave Marsh, rock critic, Bruce Springsteen Biographer and former editor of Rolling Stone and Creem Magazines.
- In 2007, Jo and the WDs White Room recordings were chosen to be used to promote Audio Engineering Associates (AEA) ribbon microphone line. AEA's clients include Faith Hill and Tim McGraw, Emmylou Harris, Ry Cooder, Tony Bennett, Pete Townsend, Keb Mo and many many more.
- Jo was selected as an **official showcase artist at the 1998 North American Folk Alliance Conference** in Memphis, TN. This conference is one of the most prestigious folk and acoustic music conferences in the world.
- She **represented the Folk Alliance in the Nashville Entertainment Association Extravaganza at the renown Bluebird Cafe**. There she was featured with songwriters Caroline Aiken, Buddy Mondlock and Hugh Moffatt.
- Jo **won the songwriting competition at the 1999 South Florida Folk Festival** for "Best Ballad" with her song *Dream, My Girl*.
- She **won "Best Vocalist"** in the acoustic music category at the **1999 Detroit Music Awards**.
- Jo Serrapere and the Willie Dunns have **performed on the Woodsongs Old-Time Radio Hour** in Lexington, KY.
- Jo has showcased at the CMJ Music Conference in NYC, the NEA Extravaganza in Nashville, the LMNOP Conference in New Orleans, the Philadelphia Music Conference and first alternate at the 2003 Americana Music Association Conference in Nashville.
- Jo and her band have **opened for national acts such as Emmylou Harris, Ralph Stanley, Guy Davis, R.L. Burnside, Bill Morrissey and Mary Gauthier**.
- **MUSIC FESTIVALS**
  - Ann Arbor Folk Festival (Ann Arbor, MI)
  - NotSXS festival (Austin, TX)
  - Bluesfest International (Windsor, ON)
  - Grape Jam Festival (Erie, PA)
  - Detroit Tastefest (Detroit, MI)
  - International Fest Of Arts&Ideas (NewHaven, CT)
  - Fingerlakes Grassroots Festival (Trumansburg, NY)
  - Shakori Hills Grassroots Festival (Chapel Hill, NC)
  - Nor-East'r Festival (Mio, MI)
  - Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage (Washington, DC)
  - Twangfest (St. Louis, MO)
  - Kerrville Folk Festival (Kerrville, TX)
  - Top Of the Park Festival (Ann Arbor, MI)
  - Dogwood Festival (Atlanta, GA)
  - S. Florida Folk Festival (Ft. Lauderdale, FL)
  - Farmfest (Johannesburg, MI)
  - Blissfest (Cross Village, MI)
  - Arts, Beats & Eats festival (Pontiac, MI)
  - Riverfolk Festival (Manchester, MI)

## DISCOGRAPHY

- **Love Going South** by Jo Serrapere. Upcoming release.
- **Tonight at Johnny's Speakeasy** by Jo Serrapere & the Willie Dunns (Detroit Radio Co., 2002). Live CD which reached #13 on the *Freeform American Roots Chart* in 2003. John Conquest, editor of Texas Magazine's *Third Coast Music* and the *Freeform American Roots Chart* voted this CD #6 album of 2003.
- **She Went Upstairs** by Uncle Earl (Detroit Radio Co., 2002). Jo released a bluegrass and old-time Appalacian CD with songwriter K.C. Groves under the band name Uncle Earl. **Produced by Grammy Award artist Sally Van Meter**, this recording contains an all-female cast of musicians including Van Meter and Laurie Lewis. Uncle Earl with its new members continues to record and perform for Rounder Records.
- **My Blue Heaven** by Jo Serrapere (One Man Clapping Records, 1998). Includes *Oil and Water*, *Current Magazine's* number one song of 1997 in Southern Michigan.

- Jo appears on the 2005 self-titled recording by the **Royal Garden Trio** (Tom Bogardus, Brian Delaney, Mike Karoub) with the Shavers and Robin standard *Undecided*. This particular cut was featured prominently on many jazz radio programs including the CBC. This recording also features guest appearances by Bess Bonnier, James Dapogny, Jon-Erik Kellso, Paul King, Melissa Brady and Donn Deniston.

## COMPILATIONS

- Jo appears on the 2007 European compilation called **Smooth Jazz Avenue, Volume 2** (Sony/BMG). Jo sings a duet with Stuart Francke on his song, "Born to Love You." The three-CD set includes songs from Miles Davis, Frank Sinatra, more.
- Jo and WDs appear on **H.U.A.C. (Hot Unsigned and Unsigned Americana Compilation) Vol. I and II** (Catamount Records, 2003 & 2004).

## REVIEWS

"I might take a train, I might take a plane, but if I have to walk, I know I'm gonna see Jo Serrapere again. Like anybody else who might make you laugh and cry in the same song, she's too good to pass up."

— **Dave Marsh**, *Music Critic & Author*  
*Born to Run: The Bruce Springsteen Story,*  
*Former Editor of Creem and Rolling Stone Magazine*

"Jo Serrapere is a very special artist. She moves effortlessly within musical genres from blues and jazz to contemporary folk songs... I am confident Jo will continue to bring new things to the larger musical community."

— **Jim Fleming**,  
*Fleming and Associates, Artist Representative*  
*for Ani DiFranco, Suzy Bogguss, Kelly Joe Phelps and Jeff Daniels*

"The lyrics and content are strong with songs that deal with human issues of life and love... It's a pleasure to hear a woman who can sing the 'Blues' and sing them well."

— **Bonnie Austring-Winter**  
*CBC Radio*

"Writes first rate blues songs... and sings with a convincing assurance and bite."

— **Dirty Linen**

"Four Stars! A 90's, post-feminist speakeasy..."

— **Karen Koski**,  
*Detroit Metro Times*

"A spring breeze in a bleak winter of Ani DiFranco clones. More influenced by the likes of Kurt Weill than by the new breed of female pop singers, Serrapere can haul an old song into the 21st century and still treat it with respect. Old song or new, she is a compelling performer whose material is smart, sharp, sexy, highly individual and capable of galvanizing an audience. Personally, I think she is going to be around for a long time, and she could wind up being a major player."

— **Dave Siglin**,  
*Owner of The Ark in Ann Arbor, Michigan*

"I stumbled on the amazing Ms. Serrapere on Garrison Keillor's A Prairie Home Companion. Her voice and songwriting cut through the crappy, tinny speaker in my truck like smooth buttercream falling through a rusty sieve, and I heard a young talent that did the most damnably hard thing in music: made sexy sound wholesome. Quick, somebody put a big band behind this woman and tell them to do whatever the heck she says."

— **Berkeley Breathed**,  
*Screenwriter, filmmaker, and creator of Pulitzer Prize winning comic strips "Bloom County" and "Outland"*

". . . Recalls the way Jimmie Rodgers used to sing the blues... Her vocals remind me of early Emmylou."

— **Bernard Canut**,  
*Radio Canut, France*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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