

## ISS Showcase At Stony Brook

ISS will showcase some of its member songwriters at a show scheduled for May 19 at the University Café in SUNY Stony Brook. Members were asked to nominate performers. The votes are in and most of the scheduled slots are taken.

But a runoff vote will take place from April 4 to April 9 to decide on two slots for which there were no clear winners.

Already picked to perform in the group/duo time slots are **Tornado Alley**, **Banned and the Blacklisted** (with four members of the Defibrillators), **Universal Dice**, **Rusty Lugs** and guest **Little Toby Walker**.

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## Next Workshop

*May 2*

The next songwriting workshop is at 7:30 p.m. May 2 at Five Towns College in Dix Hills.

## Find It Online

Visit our web site,  
[www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org)

# CAPUTO RIDES THE AIRWAVES

## ISS member gets exposure on local radio

By Pedro Pereira

On March 6, ISS member **Jim Caputo** turned on the radio to hear himself. The station was WUSB-FM 90.1 and the DJ, Charlie Backfish, played Jim's song "Eddie's Car."

He could barely believe his ears, even though he knew the song was scheduled to be played. He pumped his fist in the air a few times and listened closely, even though he knew the song front to back. After all, he wrote it.

"It's a strange thing to hear yourself on the radio," Jim said. "Charlie was gracious enough to let me know via e-mail ahead of time so I was tuned in and ready. I even recorded a little 15-second clip of Charlie talking about me and put it up on the reviews page of my web site.

Jim, a recent addition to the ISS member roster, has brought some of the best songs to the organization's workshops in recent months. He blends pleasant melodies with though-provoking lyrics that leave you wanting more when the song ends.

Considering the quality of his music, which is reminiscent of folkie Richard Shindell, it doesn't take much to figure out why WFUV and a couple of other radio stations in the region have taken notice. Jim's songs also have been played on Connecticut's WKZE-FM 98.1, and SUNY Stony Brook's WFUV-FM 90.7.

Getting radio play is a remarkable achievement for any songwriter in this age of limited playlists that pretend the only music in existence is highly formulaic and commercial. Jim says he is not sure yet what the effect of being on the radio will have on his music career, aside from getting residuals.

"I think the WFUV play is helpful in this sense: When people know that you've been played on there, perhaps they're more inclined to actually listen to what you're singing about. Of course I could be totally wrong about that. I played at a Folk Music Society of Huntington open mic recently and, before beginning the song, told the audience about the upcoming FUV thing and I was surprised when the room broke into a round of applause."

Jim credits ISS Director **Sonny Speed** with helping him get the exposure.

"When I was contacted by WKZE in Connecticut and was asked for a press kit, I had no idea what should be included in such a thing. I dialed up Sonny and he was incredibly helpful in giving me not only a list of things to include, but great advice on sources for copy. Sonny suggested a folder containing a headshot, a bio, a list of newspaper clippings and reviews, and a list of venues where I've performed."

Sonny also suggested using different colored paper to help create interest. Someone else recommended placing a picture of his CD on the cover and Jim's good friend, **Sarah Haddock**, an ISS member, suggested including a magnet that someone could use and keep Jim's name in sight.

"It was a busy weekend putting that kit together but obviously well worth the effort," Jim said. "Considering how many independent works radio stations must get each week, getting some show host to actually notice your CD is probably the hardest part of the process."

Jim started playing guitar when he was 12. In his early 20s he played sets around the area, three- to four-hour marathons of mostly covers.

"I really only had a couple of originals that I thought good enough to include in my

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## Writer's Choice

By Gerry Dantone

Although each month at the ISS Workshop brings a number of fine tunes to the fore, it is not really often

**Winners:** Pedro Pereira

that a song reaches the heights of true art and transcendence. **Pedro Pereira's** tune is that rarity: a song that just cannot be denied.

"Saudade", a difficult to translate Portuguese word, was a beautiful tune sung in that language, and was wonderful to behold even if one could not understand the lyrics. The guitars, vocals, rhyme scheme, rhythm, *everything* worked beautifully on just the aesthetic level. The English translation, however, as limited as it necessarily had to be, was so awesome one could only wonder how amazing the song must have sounded in the original tongue.

The song was a haunting monologue of a sailor who was married to the sea, and who can only wonder why he is unable to resist its lure. Pedro sang, "I was a sailor without direction/On an impossible route/In a boat made of dreams/And an out-of-reach destination."

Question: What can you say about a song that says, "I left shadows in four corners/That remain until now." Answer: Bravo!

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## SS Member Gets Exposure on Local Radio

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sets," he said. "I'll admit I really didn't enjoy performing in those venues. Music in bars and coffeehouses mostly serves as background noise and I didn't really get much satisfaction out of playing those places. I walked away from performing for a lot of years."

In the late 1980s, Jim got a hold of a Windham Hill sampler with artists such as John Gorka, Bill Morrissey and Sara Hickman. He went on a quest to find more music by them and in the process realized that writing songs was what he wanted to do.

When writing, Jim thinks about what it is about his favorite songwriters that works for him. With that in mind, he tries to write songs that can apply to different people in different situations.

"I try to find those moments in time to which we can all relate, those snapshots of life at a moment where we know it's all about to change," he says. "A lot of my songs are about those. I'm also very interested in history and firmly believe that if enough of us are ignorant of past mistakes, those mistakes will be repeated. That's where songs like 'Eddie's Car' and 'Melted Toys' come from."

In the writing process, Jim works on words and music simultaneously. Most writers will tell you one or the other comes first. "Once I have a couple of lines of words and music, I just start writing and see where I end up. A lot of times, I'll set out to write a song about a certain topic only to be surprised when the song is finished and it's about something completely different."

After writing a bunch of songs by the late 1990s, Jim got back into performing. He had songs he thought were good enough to play out but he still wasn't sure if he'd enjoy performing. He finally decided to play at a Folk Music Society of Huntington open mic.

"Armed with two songs, a guitar, and at least one person who would've lied to my face, if necessary, and told me how good I was, I went there one night and played. I don't remember what songs, but I do remember some people coming up to me afterwards and telling me how much they liked it. I did a few more of their open mics, and the next year they asked me to be in the annual members concert. For that, I'd get a whole 15 minutes on stage."

He's been doing the occasional gig since, and as with many songwriters, preparation for the performances is a bit nerve-wrecking.

"Have I practiced the songs enough? Will I have anything to say between the songs? I like making connections with the audience between songs. I know personally, the best shows I've been to are ones where the performer doesn't just sing, but shares himself/herself with the audience. I try to do that. I'll tell stories about what inspired songs, stories about myself, and allow the people sitting there to connect on more than just a musical level. From my own point of view, the time in between songs is as important as the songs themselves."

## ISS Showcase Scheduled for May at SUNY Stony Brook

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In addition to the group/duo performances, the show will include slots for solo performers. Three songwriters already garnered enough votes to secure slots: **Pedro Pereira**, **Walter Sargent** and **Bob Campbell**.

Two more slots remain up for grabs, but a runoff vote is necessary because of a tie between **Suzanne Ernst**, **Sarah Haddock**, **Frank Gambino** and **Jim Caputo**. ISS Director

**Sonny Speed** said he will announce the winners on April 10, one day after the voting ends.

by Walter Sargent

In what some are calling “one of the most important copyright cases in history,” the music industry’s case against Grokster and StreamCast Networks has gone to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The defendants are publishers of two of the most popular peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing programs available: Grokster and Morpheus. That copyright violations occur on these networks is not in dispute. That the defendants did not commit these violations is not in dispute either. The charge is one of “secondary” liability. (1)

Decades ago when makers of blank audio and video tape faced the same accusations, the courts decided that there was sufficient non-infringing use and allowed the product on the market. For P2P networks, non-infringing use include sharing files of public-domain works, copyrighted works provided with the owners’ permission and even internet-routed phone calls. As that usage currently accounts for less than 10 percent of the file sharing on these networks, Sony BMG Music CEO Andrew Lack concludes “their business is based on stealing... It’s a racket, plain and simple.” (2)

But if the issue were plain and simple, a Supreme Court decision would not be required. Companies like Intel are concerned that a decision to hold technology companies liable for what people do with technology will have a “chilling effect on technological innovation.”

“In fact,” according to The Economist (3), “some make the case that P2P technology could make the internet more robust and secure by avoiding the use of centralized servers, and that the entertainment companies’ lawsuit is thus harmful to the web as a whole... Even if the entertainment business manages to coax more users into paying for legal downloads and succeeds in court against Grokster and StreamCast, its problems are unlikely to go away. It is not clear that curbing illegal downloading will translate into extra sales. A rush into legal downloading would hardly be good for sales of CDs: some cannibalization is inevitable.”

For certain applications, P2P technology put the Internet on steroids. It is a terrific accelerant that makes whole new businesses possible. This is why this case is so important.

### From the “Yes, But Is It Progress?” Department

WurldMedia has been making deals with major labels left and right for their legal P2P technology (4): The technology and business model appear to be identical to Weed. One difference is that WurldMedia is spyware. Google-ing “WurldMedia” returns a wall of “WurldMedia removal” sites, essentially qualifying it as “anti-consumer.”

Consumers don’t want spyware. Go figure. The same cannot be said of Weed (the technology). Weed is not spyware. The other difference seems to be that PeerImpact is only available to major labels. Since they don’t address that issue in their FAQs and haven’t responded to inquiry, I can only imagine that unsigned artists aren’t a priority.

### Past and Future

If the Court shuts Grokster and Morpheus down, another file-sharing technological breakthrough is ready to fill the gap. The Pez candy dispenser, the original “handheld device,” has been upgraded to dispense MP3s. Who wudda thunk it? Pez, the ultimate stealth file-sharing technology. If the music industry wanted to avoid the threat of piracy, “they should have stuck by Thomas Edison’s technology. His wax cylinders could record a performance but could not be reproduced; that became possible only with the invention of the flat-disc record some years later.” (5)

*For further reference:*

Entertainment Biz Preps for Day in Court

<http://www.obviousnews.com/breakingnews/stories/obviousnews-55642.html>

## Who Played What

Here’s the list of songwriters and songs from last month’s ISS workshop:

**Bill DeZego**  
“Just Remember I Love You”  
**Bill Goldsmith**  
“Weighed Down by Fur”  
**Bob Campbell**  
“Right to the Limits”  
**Pedro Pereira**  
“Saudade”  
**Jim Caputo**  
“The Price”  
**Sarah Haddock**  
“Eyes on You”  
**Fred Bredfry**  
“Going Back to New York City”  
**Michael Svezia**  
“Hanging by a Thread”  
**John Graybosch**  
“Sunrise Guitar Blues”  
**Andy Martinez**  
“Golden Road”  
**Frank Gambino**  
“They Forgot Who You Are”  
**Lois Morton**  
*unknown*



## What's Doin'

ISS members are always out and about. Check your local listings for appearances live, on the radio or even on TV. Go to [www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org) for gigs and links to member sites with information about CD releases, shows and MP3s. Here's what's happening in the coming weeks. (*Check with the venue first because dates and times may change.*)

### ISS Workshop

Test out your songs in front of fellow musicians, who provide constructive feedback. The workshop is on the first day of each month at **Five Towns College, Burrs Lane**, Dix Hills. Run by ISS Director **Sonny Speed**, It starts at 7:30 p.m. Bring a guitar to perform your song live, or you may choose to play a CD or tape. A piano is available for keyboardists. Be sure to bring 25 copies of your lyrics so other workshops attendees can follow along and provide feedback.  
*Next workshop: May 2*

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## Writer's Choice

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A worthy runner-up this month was **Sarah Haddock** on piano for the radio friendly tune "Eyes on You," which tread on the territory currently populated by the Avril Lavignes and Vanessa Carltons of the world. We do want to hear this again with a rock band banging it out!

*Gerry Dantone is almost ready to join the Merchant Marines!*

## Promote Yourself on the ISS Web Site

The ISS is now offering songwriters *their own web pages* on the ISS web site. Whether you already have your own web site or not, a personal web page on the ISS site brings you closer to the traffic with a polished and professional look. If you don't already have a web site, it is an especially good deal. The fee is \$30 a year.

In addition to creating a web presence for yourself, you are supporting ISS web site development. So if you like the way the web site is going, you can help *keep it going* by signing up. Please see the web site for details:

<http://www.islandsongwriters.org>

## Online Music News

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(2) Sony BMG exec seeking balance

[http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/techpolicy/2005-03-27-lack-balance\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/techpolicy/2005-03-27-lack-balance_x.htm)

(3) Grokster and StreamCast face the music

[http://www.economist.com/agenda/displayStory.cfm?story\\_id=3785847](http://www.economist.com/agenda/displayStory.cfm?story_id=3785847)

(4) Peer Impact

<http://www.peerimpact.com>

(5) Pez to dispense MP3s instead of candy

[http://news.com.com/Pez+to+dispense+MP3s+instead+of+candy/2100-1041\\_3-5637456.html?tag=st\\_lh](http://news.com.com/Pez+to+dispense+MP3s+instead+of+candy/2100-1041_3-5637456.html?tag=st_lh)

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## Open Mics

**Borders, Jericho Turnpike**, Syosset, hosted by Bill Ryan or Vincent Crici, first Thursday of the month. Sign-up at 7:30 p.m. *Next gig: May 5*

**The Cooke's In**, Huntington, 7:30 p.m. Thursdays

**Pisces Cafe, Railroad Ave**, Babylon, 8 p.m. Wednesdays

**Sea Cliff Coffee Co.**, Sea Cliff, 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays

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## ISS Staff

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## Newsletter

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To submit newsletter items, contact Pedro Pereira at [peddi@optonline.net](mailto:peddi@optonline.net).

Visit our web site at [www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org).