

Sunday
NOV 23
7:30 pm

Pavilion

Jonatha Brooke

Singer-songwriter merging folk,
melodic pop and roots rock



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Landmark National Bank is pleased
to sponsor this evening's performance.

**There will be no intermission during this performance.
Song selections will be announced from the stage.**

Folk-pop singer-songwriter Jonatha Brooke—who was born in Chicago in 1964 but moved to the suburbs of Boston with her family before she was a year old—clearly remembers the wide range of music her older brothers were putting on the turntable long before she got a guitar. She heard everything from Joni Mitchell to The Who. But when her dad gave her that guitar for Christmas at the age of 12, the first thing she taught herself to play was America's "A Horse with No Name." By the time she was in seventh grade, she was playing in a band called Science Function, while at the same time taking ballet lessons.

Settling in at Amherst College, two important things happened: she discovered The Roches, which led to her experimenting with open tuning to get some of their sounds; and she met singer and guitarist Jennifer Kimball at an audition for the college a cappella group, resulting in the formation of the harmony-drenched folk-duo Jonatha and Jennifer and later morphed into The Story.

Brooke's first stab at songwriting was during her sophomore year, when an assignment to put original music to any E.E. Cummings poem became the story song "Love Is More Thicker Than Forget." The duo moved to Boston after college and released two story albums (1991's *Grace in Gravity* and it's 1993 follow-up *The Angel in the House*). But Kimball parted ways as the third, *Plumb*, was taking shape, and it became a Brooke solo project. Several more solo albums came out, with many tunes featuring folkie ideas accompanied by jazzy chords. Brooke eventually gave up dancing and concentrated on guitar playing, singing and writing, and she also took up the piano, mandolin and kalimba. Along with her original material, she's done covers of "Fire and Rain" and "Across the Universe," among others, and, with the blessing of Woody Guthrie's daughter, Nora Guthrie, put original music to some of his unpublished lyrics for her 2008 album *The Works*.

Brooke has co-written songs with Katy Perry and The Courtyard Hounds. She's also written for four Disney films, including the animated sequel *Return To Neverland*, where she wrote and sang "I'll Try" and sings the opening song, "Second Star To The Right." She has also written for numerous television shows, notably composing and performing the theme song for Joss Whedon's *Dollhouse*.

After taking time off from her career to care for her ailing mother, Brooke returned to the scene in 2014 with a highly celebrated Off-Broadway production of her one-woman musical, *My Mother Has 4 Noses*. The story-filled show chronicles her relationship with her mom, while she was battling Alzheimer's disease. Its 12-week run at the Duke Theater on 42nd Street in New York opened the door to a new creative outlet for Brooke in the theatre world. Since its opening, she has been tapped to co-write more musicals: *Death and Venice* and *Hopper* with Anton Dudley; *Quadroon* with the late, legendary Joe Sample; *Switched* with Geoffrey Nauffts; and *Tempus* with Jaclyn Backhaus.

After 16 years in New York City, Brooke relocated to Minneapolis in 2016, recorded and released her EP *Imposter*, received a prestigious McKnight Artist Grant and won an International Independent Songwriting award for material from her 2016 album *Midnight. Hallelujah*. During the Covid pandemic, Brooke livestreamed her weekly *Kitchen Covid Concert* series on Facebook and YouTube, with fans tuning in from every corner of the planet.

An independent artist since 1999, Brooke released her 11th solo CD, *The Sweetwater Sessions*, on her label, Bad Dog Records, in July 2020.