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# Master songwriter Prine plays Seattle

## The Cowboy Junkies also highlight the week's upcoming music scene.

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Special to The Herald

Grammy-winning songwriter John Prine is back with music from "Standard Songs for Average People," a collaboration with bluegrass musician Mac Wiseman.

Prine will perform Thursday in Seattle.

The singer-songwriter returns with an even deeper compassion and continues social commentary.

Prine's previous CD, "Fair and Square," earned him his second Grammy.

"Standard" includes Lefty Frizzelle's hit "Saginaw Michigan" and Tom T. Hall's "Old Dogs, Children and Watermelon Wine."

Not even throat cancer in 1998 could derail Prine, although it did lower his voice. He had to change the key on many songs to fit his new voice, which he says he now likes better than the original one.

Cat Loves Crow, JW Sparrow & Joe DeBenedictis: Joe and Karena Prater play folk, old-time music, bluegrass and traditional Russian songs. Both came from families of classical musicians. Joe Prater brings a background of country and mountain music to Karena's interest in jazz, folk music and Russian songs. She was an exchange student in Russia, then lived and worked in Siberia for two years. Guitarist John Sparrow and pianist Joe DeBenedictis have played Americana songs for more than 15 years. Tonight, Everett

Cowboy Junkies: The Canadian alt-country band celebrates the 20th anniversary of its second but seminal album, "Trinity Session," by touring behind a new CD, "At the End of Paths Taken." Margo Timmins' vocals and her brother Michael's songwriting and guitar continue to intrigue through various approaches, often plaintive and hypnotic, across the years. "Paths" is a more personal collection of songs than some of their albums, often dealing with family at both ends of life.

Matt the Electrician: The Austin-based former electrician quit his day job a few years back and concentrated on music. He tends to write about the personal, although as with many singer-songwriters, one can see a certain universality in his songs. Tuesday, Seattle

CeU: Critics have called her "a new star in the sky" and her first album "enchanting." With music rooted in Brazilian samba, CeU (pronounced Sayou") combines Afro-beat, electro-jazz and soul. She's been a hit in Brazil and France, and was nominated for a 2006 Grammy in the Best New Artist category. Sunday, Seattle

Alice Stuart: Although her niche is secure in the Washington State Blues Hall of Fame, Stuart continues to add to her legend as a trailblazer for women in folk, blues and rock 'n' roll with a new CD and a performance to celebrate its release. Alice & the Formerly were chosen Best New/Reformed Band in 2006 by the Washington Blues Society, and Stuart was given her third straight Best Songwriter award. Saturday, Seattle

Girlyman: The pop group doesn't take itself too seriously (see the name) but with the latest CD, "Joyful Sign," the trio shows that Girlyman still works well within a folk-pop-bluegrass framework. The three are classically trained, play a mixed bag of instruments and are fans of harmony. Tonight, Seattle

Martin Sexton: The singer-songwriter once managed to sell 20,000 copies of his CD, a collection of self-produced demo recordings, out of his guitar case while busking. Now he has a National Academy of Songwriters' Artist of the Year award. Although he had a major label behind him at one point, he asked to be released and now has total artistic freedom. He's touring with music from his seventh recording, "Seeds," released this month. Thursday, Seattle

The Long Winters: Led by songwriter and guitarist John Roderick, Seattle-based The Long Winters is back with "Putting the Days to

Bed." While earlier albums reflected Roderick's making sense of life, he's now trying to expand his take on life. Thursday, Seattle

John Prine performs Thursday in Seattle.

The Cowboy Junkies perform Tuesday in Seattle.

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