

# Jen Chapin Trio makes road trip for Midwest tour

By Tripp J Crouse

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>>>Traveling from the Brooklyn borough of New York City to Iowa will be a family affair for singer-songwriter Jen Chapin.

Chapin — along with her husband, two young sons (Maceo, 5 ½, and Van, 1 ½) and Jamie Fox, the guitar player for the Jen Chapin Trio — will make the long drive to the Hawkeye State this month as part of a Midwest tour.

"You decide you're going to drive out to Iowa, you want to make it worth your while," Chapin, 40, said.

The trio loaded up appearances for their short schedule in Iowa, including a stop in Davenport.

The Jen Chapin Trio will perform their urban folk and jazz music on Friday, April 15, at the Redstone Room in downtown Davenport.

Earlier that day, Chapin will play at 2 p.m. at the Java House in Iowa City to record a live set with Ben Kieffer of Iowa Public Radio.

On Saturday in Davenport, she'll be at Mojo's Cafe in the RME for an free improvisation workshop for young jazz musicians, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m..

Later that day, she'll travel to Des Moines.

## if you go

**What:** Jen Chapin Trio, with Amanda Shires

**When:** 8 p.m. Friday, April 15

**Where:** Redstone Room, inside River Music Experience, 129 Main St., Davenport

**How much:** \$12 in advance, \$15 day of the show

**Information:** (563) 326-1333 or redstoneroom.com

**On the Web:** www.jenchapin.com

>>> **MORE ONLINE:** Jen Chapin compares some of her music with that of Rickie Lee Jones and Joan Armatrading at [gctimes.com](http://gctimes.com).

"If you're going all that way, you want as many people to hear you as possible," Chapin said. "It's a little bit busier. We don't always do afternoon stuff, radio stuff before a show."

"Needless to say, we're not going to be out partying after every gig," she said with a laugh.

Chapin, one of five children born to late folk singer Harry Chapin, gives some credit to her upbringing for her creativity.

"I think just in general, com-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**Jen Chapin, with her husband, Stephan Crump, center, and Jamie Fox, perform next week at the River Music Experience's Redstone Room.**

ing from an artistic family, where doing something so wacky as being a musician or artist was not seen as totally outlandish," she said in a telephone interview from her home in Brooklyn. "I think that made a big impact.

"In a lot of ways it was a classic suburban upbringing — American," she added.

And while folk music was a large part of her family, Chapin separates herself a bit from the genre's more traditional version.

"I'm not a classic folk singer in that sense of going out there with my guitar and strumming and telling a story," she said. "I do all that, but what inspires me, what has always motivated me as a musician,

is writing a song that's fun for the guys to play."

Chapin's husband, Stephan Crump, plays acoustic bass while Fox plays guitar for the trio. "We're a close-knit group," she said.

The singer likens some of her music to artists such as American vocalist and songwriter Rickie Lee Jones and British singer-songwriter Joan Armatrading, a three-time Grammy Award nominee.

## FIVE QUESTIONS

**1. Coming from an artistic family, was there a lot of sibling rivalry growing up?**

I have three brothers and one sister. Maybe to a fault we're not a competitive bunch.

**2. Where did you find the inspiration for your sons' names?**

Maceo, his name was inspired by a saxophone player, Maceo Parker, who played in James Brown's band.

Van, his name was inspired by Van Morrison, but also by the environmental civil rights activist Van Jones.

**3. Do you introduce your children to a lot of different music?**

"Part of having kids is letting them form their own identities and interests. The baby, Van, he hears two bars of something and he starts dancing. He's more into music. ... Maceo has been exposed to a lot.

**4. Your songs have a jazz foundation, but your lyrics have a twinge of social commentary and can be fun. Is that intentional?**

I try to make it light and fun. A lot of my favorite music, I'm not even listening to the words,

I'm grooving off the music itself, off the beat and what the bass player is doing.

**5. Did you have an idea of the overall tone for the song "Go Away" and then build the string parts around that?**

This is an example of one of my songs where I just played it for my band and they intuitively heard, with some coaching from me, what parts to build in around mine. Basically, they are improvising and making magic as they go along.

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