

katie fitzgerald's  
presents

Casa Alianza Charity  
10th Anniversary  
Benefit Concert

featuring  
**Suzanne Vega**

support  
**Eddy Morton**



Birmingham Town Hall  
12th July 2009



# Casa Alianza Charity 10th Anniversary Benefit Concert

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## Programme

**8 pm**

Welcome by Fred Shortland,  
Chief Executive Casa Alianza UK

**8.05 - 8.45 pm**

Eddy Morton

**8.45 - 9.15 pm**

Interval

**9.15 - 10.30 pm**

Suzanne Vega

*(Timings may be subject to change)*

### SUZANNE VEGA

Lead vocals, acoustic guitar

### MIKE VISCEGLIA

Bass

### GERRY LEONARD

Electric guitar

### PHIL SULLIVAN

Tour manager & sound engineer

### MARK DYDE

Guitar technician, backline, stage manager

### Special Thanks

Michael Houseman Artist Management Inc  
John Giddings & Sarah Sherlock @ Solo Agency Limited  
Trina, Eddy and staff of Katie Fitzgerald's  
Birmingham Town Hall Management & Staff  
Ultrasonics, Birmingham - PA hire  
Rob Annas, Birmingham - Back line hire  
Liz Moretti - Promotion  
CTB Print & Design Ltd, Kettering.

Casa Alianza UK, trustees, staff and volunteers

Design & Printed by CTB Print & Design Ltd.

## Welcome everybody!

### Why & How?

Thank you so much for being here with us tonight for what I know will be a wonderful evening of music by world class artists.

Artists that we are so proud and privileged to know and who have been outstanding ambassadors for the work of Casa Alianza and the ongoing struggle for human rights - particularly children's rights.

In this day and age sadly we still have to ask ourselves - WHY:

150,000,000 children are forced to live on the streets of our world and

Why is it that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is almost universally ratified, yet record numbers of children continue to suffer and have their most basic rights denied them, even in our own communities?

We are all here for different reasons, but the primary objective is to raise awareness and funds for our field programmes and human rights work for homeless and at risk children.

HOW...By being here this evening you have contributed, and we thank you.

However, I would ask you at some point to reflect on how you may help and become a catalyst for change. Call me nuts if you like, but I truly believe that each and every one of us has the capacity to make the world a better place and it is really not that difficult if we all play our part.

Please take some time to visit our website [www.casa-alianza.org.uk](http://www.casa-alianza.org.uk) to learn more about what we do, and if you can, please help us get more children off the streets and out of danger.

*"All that is necessary for evil to succeed is that good men do nothing"  
(Edmund Burke)*

So many people have contributed in so many ways to the success of this event.

All the artists and crew have waived their fees, suppliers have granted very special rates and volunteers have given generously of their time and we are truly very grateful.

Our special thanks to Trina & Eddy of Katie Fitzgerald's who not only came up with the idea but also took on the role of promoter and covered our costs.

Our initial target was to clear £10,000 but with your generosity we may well surpass this...which if we do will be just fantastic!

Thank you for your support.

Have a great evening and thank you!

**Fred Shortland**  
Chief Executive  
Casa Alianza UK



Opening Doors for Homeless Youth  
Honduras Mexico Nicaragua

Website: [www.casa-alianza.org.uk](http://www.casa-alianza.org.uk)

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## Suzanne Vega's Birmingham mission to help street children



Excerpts from an interview by Diane Parkes, Birmingham Post & Mail, June 1st 2009

Singer Suzanne Vega is only too happy to make time for a worthy cause, as Diane Parkes discovered.

Suzanne is playing the one-off concert as a benefit gig for the charity **Casa Alianza**, which helps street children in Central America. It is a charity she discovered many years ago and which, this year, celebrates the tenth anniversary of the foundation of its UK branch.

When **Casa Alianza** asked her to headline the concert she was more than happy to do so.

*"I have known of the charity for many years and when they came up with the idea of a benefit concert I thought it was a great idea," she says.*

*"Every time I come to the UK I try to do something to raise money or awareness of Casa Alianza and this seemed like the perfect opportunity. I am really glad we are doing this. I like the English audiences and I hope they come along and support us. Casa Alianza really gets involved. They pay for things like legal representation for children who live on the streets and they are reaching children who other organisations can't.*

*"As a public figure I feel I have to prioritise the organisations I get involved with so I tend to work with organisations which really work for human rights and children's rights. In the group of organisations I work with I would put Casa Alianza, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Witness and I have recently become aware of an organisation called SOS Children's Villages*

*She believes that, as a household name, she has a duty to do her bit.*

*"I think it is because I became a public figure largely because of the song Luka and that song is a song about child abuse," she says.*

*"It is a song which has a lot of resonance. I still get letters from people saying that song is their story and they cannot believe I have been able to put their story into words. It is not as if I became a public figure through doing fashion or writing love songs – it was for saying something about an important issue.*

*"Luka was inspired by a little boy who lived in my block. He was not abused but he always looked very sensitive. I liked his name and I saw him in the lobby one day and I thought that if I ever wrote a song about an abused child that child would be called Luka.*

*"When the song first came out I don't think people actually realised that was what it was about. It was only when my manager put it forward as a song about child abuse that people realised*

*that it was a song about a social issue. And there are things to say about child abuse. It is part of life but people don't write about it. Songs are very effective at getting a message across.*

*"And I have written songs which include street children. The song Zephyr & I has a kid in it who was living on the streets in the 1970s."*

*Luka may have been one of the singles which first gained Suzanne fame but her first two albums – Suzanne Vega in 1985 and Solitude Standing in 1987 – firmly placed her on the map as a singer-songwriter. She has toured England many times and even met the Queen, as a guest of Casa Alianza.*

*"The Queen came to say hello at Casa Alianza and was asking all about it. I was in Scotland at the time but I couldn't pass up that opportunity so came down to meet her. She was great, very down-to-earth. She shook my hand and she said she understood I helped Fred (Shortland, who runs Casa Alianza UK) – I don't think she really knew who I was."*

*The tour, which also takes in Russia, Hungary, Germany and Israel, will give her a break from a monumental task she has set herself.*

*"I have been re-recording my catalogue so I can own the masters of my material," she says. "It is taking a lot of time as I have about 60 songs to do and am up to about the 35th song. So I am re-recording songs like Luka, Tom's Diner, Gypsy.*

*"I am changing the arrangements on some of them, making them sound less produced. In some cases it is just me and a guitar or singing with just one other person playing.*

*"Artists are always finding new ways to adapt to how the music industry is changing so it would not surprise me if other artists did it.*

*"It allows you to take control of your own music. And it allows you to make your music more intimate and not over-produced. I certainly hope other artists do look into it."*

*Suzanne Vega*



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[www.suzannevega.com](http://www.suzannevega.com)

# Suzanne Vega



Widely regarded as one of the most brilliant songwriters of her generation, Suzanne Vega emerged as a leading figure of the folk-music revival of the early 1980s when, accompanying herself on acoustic guitar, she sang what has been labelled contemporary folk or neo-folk songs of her own creation in Greenwich Village clubs. Since the release of her self-titled, critically acclaimed 1985 debut album, she has given sold-out concerts in many of the world's best-known halls. In performances devoid of outward drama that nevertheless convey deep emotion, Vega sings in a distinctive, clear vibrato-less voice that has been described as "a cool, dry sandpaper-brushed near-whisper" and as "plaintive but disarmingly powerful."

Bearing the stamp of a masterful storyteller who "observed the world with a clinically poetic eye," Suzanne's songs have always tended to focus on city life, ordinary people and real world subjects. Notably succinct and understated, often cerebral but also streetwise, her lyrics invite multiple interpretations. In short, Suzanne Vega's work is immediately recognizable, as utterly distinct and thoughtful, and as creative and musical now, as it was when her voice was first heard on the radio over 20 years ago.

Suzanne was born in Santa Monica, CA, but grew up in Spanish Harlem and the Upper West Side of New York City. She was influenced by her mother, a computer systems analyst and her stepfather, the Puerto Rican writer Egardo Vega Yunque. There was a heady mix of multicultural music playing at home: Motown, bossa nova, jazz and folk. At age 11 she picked up a guitar and as a teenager she started to write songs.

Suzanne studied dance at the High School for the Performing Arts and later attended Barnard College where she majored in English Literature. It was in 1979 when Suzanne attended a concert by Lou Reed and began to find her true artistic voice and distinctive vision for contemporary folk. Receptionist by day, Suzanne was hanging out at the Greenwich Village Songwriter's Exchange by night. Soon she was playing iconic venues like The Bottom Line and Folk City. The word was out and audiences were catching on.

At first, record companies saw little prospect of commercial success. Suzanne's demo tape was rejected by every major record company—and twice by the very label that eventually signed her: A&M Records. Her self-titled debut album was finally released in 1985, co-produced by Steve Addabbo and Lenny Kaye, the former guitarist for Patti Smith. The sceptical executives at A & M were expecting to sell 30,000 LP's. 1,000,000 records later, it was clear that Suzanne's voice was resonating around the world. *Marlene on the Wall* was a surprise hit in the U.K and Rolling Stone eventually included the record in their "100 Greatest Recordings of the 1980's."

1987's follow up, *Solitude Standing*, again co-produced by Addabbo and Kaye, elevated her to star status. The album hit #2 in the UK and #11 in the States, was nominated for three Grammys including Record of the Year and went platinum. "Luka" is a song that has entered the cultural vernacular; certainly the only hit song ever written from the perspective of an abused boy.

The opening song on *Solitude Standing* was a strange little a cappella piece, "Tom's Diner" about a non-descript restaurant near Columbia University uptown. Without Suzanne's permission, it was remixed by U.K. electronic dance duo "DNA" and bootlegged as "Oh Susanne." Suddenly her voice on this obscure tune was showing up in the most unlikely setting of all: the club. Suzanne permitted an official release of the remix of "Tom's Diner" under its original title which reached #5 on the Billboard pop chart and went gold. In 1991 a compilation, *Tom's Album*, brought together the remix and other unsolicited versions of the song. Meanwhile, Karlheinz Brandenburg, the German computer programmer was busy developing the technology that would come to be known as the MP3. He found that Vega's voice was the perfect template with which to test the purity of the audio compression that he was aiming to perfect. Thus Suzanne earned the nickname "The Mother of the MP3."



# biography

Suzanne co-produced the follow-up album with Anton Sanko, 1990's *Days Of Open Hand*, which won a Grammy for Best Album Package. The album also featured a string arrangement by minimalist composer Philip Glass. Years earlier she had penned lyrics for his song cycle "Songs From Liquid Days." Continuing to battle preconceptions, she teamed with producer Mitchell Froom for 1992's *99.9F*. The album's sound instigated descriptions such as "industrial folk" and "technofolk." Certified gold, *99.9F* won a New York Music Award as Best Rock Album.

In 1996, Vega returned with the similarly audacious *Nine Objects Of Desire*, also produced by Mitchell Froom, who by then was her husband. "Woman On The Tier (I'll See You Through)" was released on the *Dead Man Walking* soundtrack. Over the years, she has also been heard on the soundtracks to *Pretty In Pink* ("Left Of Centre" with Joe Jackson) and *The Truth About Cats & Dogs*, and contributed to such diverse projects as the Disney compilation *Stay Awake*, Grateful Dead tribute *Dedicated*, Leonard Cohen tribute *Tower Of Song*, and Pavarotti & Friends. In 1999, *The Passionate Eye: The Collected Writings Of Suzanne Vega*, a volume of poems, lyrics, essays and journalistic pieces was published by Spike/ Avon Books. In 2001, she returned to her acoustic roots for her first new album in five years, the critics favorite, *Songs In Red And Gray*.

Suzanne's neo-folk style has ushered in a new female, acoustic, folk-pop singer-songwriter movement that would include the likes of Tracy Chapman, Shawn Colvin, and Indigo Girls. In 1997, Suzanne joined Sarah McLachlan on her *Lilith Fair* tour which celebrated the female voice in rock and pop. She was one of the few artists invited back every year. Suzanne was also the host of the public radio series "American Mavericks," thirteen hour-long programs featuring the histories and the music of the iconoclastic, contemporary classical composers who revolutionized the possibilities of new music. The show won the Peabody Award for Excellence in Broadcasting.

In 2007, Suzanne released *Beauty & Crime* on Blue Note Records, a deeply personal reflection of her native New York City in the wake of the loss of her brother Tim and the tragedy of 9/11. But the record is not a sad one, per se, as her love for the city shines through as both its subject and its setting. In it, Suzanne mixes the past and present, the public with the private, and familiar sounds with the utterly new, just like the city itself. "Anniversary," which concludes *Beauty & Crime*, is an understated evocation of that time in the fall of 2002, when New Yorkers first commemorated the Twin Towers tragedy and when Suzanne recalls her brother's passing. It's more inspiration than elegy, though: "Make time for all your possibilities," Vega sings at the end in that beautiful, hushed voice. "They live on every street." Produced by the Scotsman, Jimmy Hogarth and featuring songs such as "New York is a Woman" and "Ludlow Street," *Beauty & Crime* is that rare album by an artist in her third decade; an album that is as original and startling as her first. *Beauty & Crime* won a Grammy for Best Engineered Album, Non-Classical.

Suzanne Vega is an artist that continues to surprise. In 2006, she became the first major recording artist to perform live in avatar form within the virtual world *Second Life*. She has dedicated much of her time and energy to charitable causes, notably Amnesty International, Casa Alianza, and the Save Darfur Coalition. Suzanne has a daughter, Ruby, by first husband Mitchell Froom. Ruby, like Suzanne before her, attends the High School for the Performing Arts. Suzanne is married to lawyer/poet Paul Mills who proposed to her originally in 1983. Suzanne accepted his proposal on Christmas Day 2005, twenty-two years later. As fascinating as the New Yorkers she has been inspired by, Suzanne Vega herself is full of stories and surprises: the everyday revelations, the grabbed-on-the-run wisdom, the strange, random, miraculous stuff that make up a singular career – or maybe just another life in the big city.

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## Gerry Leonard Guitar



Gerry Leonard is a Dublin born guitar player, songwriter and producer. Now based in New York, when not touring or recording, Gerry heads up his own project, Spooky Ghost.

As part of the New York scene, Gerry's distinctive ambient style has led to his working with many great artists over the years. A recent highlight was becoming music director / guitarist for David Bowie on his last year-long Reality world tour and DVD (2003/2004).

Apart from Bowie's last two records, Heathen and Reality, and the subsequent tours, he has also recorded and toured with other artists such as Laurie Anderson (Bright Red), Duncan Sheik (Humming / Phantom Moon / Daylight / White Limousine), Rufus Wainwright (Want One/Want Two/Release the Stars), Suzanne Vega (Songs in Red and Gray/Beauty and Crime), Donna Lewis (Now in a Minute / Blue Planet / In the Pink) and Avril Lavigne (Let's Go).

As a producer he has recently completed the new record for platinum artist Donna Lewis, in The Pink, slated for an early 2007 release, as well as Pamela Sue Mann's "L'Oeuf", a truly beautiful, ethereal record.

In film soundtracks he has recently scored an independent movie called "32A", which opens at the Galway film festival this year. His guitar playing is also featured in "The Deep End" and "Bee Season", both scored by Peter Nashell and released on Fox Searchlight Pictures. He has played on the Roger Waters / Howard Shore closing track for "The Last Mimsy".

Under the name Spooky Ghost, Gerry has recorded two solo albums. The first recording, simply called Spooky Ghost, was primarily an ambient guitar record, made in his New York apartment in 1998. His second, The Light Machine (2002), has been described by David Bowie as "Quite the most beautiful and moving pieces of work I have possessed in a long time".

Gerry Leonard Website [www.spookyghost.com](http://www.spookyghost.com)

## Michael Visceglia Bass

Michael was born in Manhattan, NY, USA on November 8th, 1954 and started playing bass at the age of 12.

- 1976-77 Toured with avant-garde rocker John Cale
- 1977-80 Co-led Rock band Spy, signed to Columbia/Kirshner Records
- 1981 Formed band with Hot Tuna/Jefferson Airplane guitarist Jorma Kaukonen called "Vital Parts"
- 1981-84 Played and toured with ex-Turtles and Frank Zappa singers Flo and Eddie
- 1985-Present Bassist for Suzanne Vega
- 1991-93 Recorded and toured as musical director for Arista Recording artist Curtis Stigers
- 2005 Wrote and published book titled "A View From The Side", a collection of road stories and interviews with some of the world's most celebrated musicians. Available from: [www.mikevisceglia.com](http://www.mikevisceglia.com)
- 2006-07 Wrote a monthly column for "Bass Guitar Magazine" titled "Soundcheck"
- 2008 Wrote a 2,500-word article for "Premier Guitar Magazine" titled "Zen and the Art of Bass Tone"

A well respected musician for over 30 years, Mike has performed and/or recorded with world class artists including Bruce Springsteen, Jackson Browne, Dar Williams, Pete Seeger, Richie Havens, Phoebe Snow, Bette Midler and of course, Suzanne Vega.

He has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Royal Albert Hall and on Broadway at the Shubert Theater.

He has also been involved with numerous film and TV soundtracks and has appeared on television on "The David Letterman Show," "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno," "Saturday Night Live," "The View" and "Live with Regis and Kathy Lee."



Web Site: [www.mikevisceglia.com](http://www.mikevisceglia.com)

## Eddy Morton



Eddy Morton is a Stourbridge based singer songwriter. Former frontman with The Bushburys, he now runs Katie Fitzgerald's with his wife Trina Keane and New Mountain Music.

Inspired to write by his interest in the early 20th century poetry of Spender, Auden, Macneice and Larkin, it was only later that he was drawn towards music by the likes of Donovan, Led Zeppelin and in particular Roy Harper.

Eddy Morton's business is words and the images they create. Often hard to pigeonhole, his songs are like chapters in a whole story yet to unfold.

As a solo performer, Eddy Morton has worked all over the UK, Ireland and the USA supporting many top acts including The Saw Doctors, Manfred Mann, Ralph McTell and Lindisfarne. In 1992 he joined Factory Records' band the Adventure Babies, working with Steve Lillywhite of U2 fame.

In 1994 he was a founder member of The New Bushbury Mountain Daredevils and throughout eleven years, 8 albums and many line up and name changes, has appeared at every major Folk/Roots Festival in the UK and Europe. These include Cambridge, Cropredy, Skagen, Guildford, Dranouter, The Badentreffen (Nuremberg) and many more.

During this time the band continually toured the UK and Europe with their last two albums "Trying to Catch the Sun" and "Timeless", released throughout Europe. "The Vision", taken from Trying to Catch the Sun, appeared on the Warner Brothers compilation "Highlands and Islands 2" alongside artists such as The Chieftains, Luka Bloom, and Van Morrison.

All Eddy Morton albums can be purchased online at Katie Fitzgerald's website: [www.katiesfest.com/merch/](http://www.katiesfest.com/merch/)

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