

Monroe Crossing

www.monroecrossing.com

BAND MEMBER BIOS (335 words)

- **Mark Anderson** has been dubbed “the bounciest bass player in bluegrass music,” and his enthusiasm captures the hearts of audiences everywhere. A native of Wisconsin, Mark plays upright bass and sings the occasional bass part. With his musical background in punk rock, Mark adds a totally unique, irresistible energy to the band — and his comic interludes occasionally stop the rest of the band in its tracks!
- Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, **Art Blackburn** handles vocals and guitar with driving intensity. His aggressive rhythm playing and punchy guitar solos are central to the band’s sound. He contributes lead and harmony vocals as well as original songs to the band’s repertoire. Art has been a fixture on the Minnesota bluegrass scene for over 30 years, playing in many popular regional bands before Monroe Crossing.
- **Benji Flaming** on banjo makes his home in Minneapolis. A multi-instrumentalist, his recent solo releases find him playing banjo, guitar, dobro, and bass. He has been featured at the International Bluegrass Music Association’s annual FanFest and has made multiple appearances on their “Masters Workshop” stage. Benji’s nuanced banjo allows Monroe Crossing the freedom to explore sounds and styles that most bluegrass bands simply never approach.
- Fiddle player and lead singer extraordinaire, **Lisa Fuglie** adds an international element to the group. The daughter of Minnesota aid program workers, she grew up in Nigeria and first discovered bluegrass music there on an old 78-rpm record. An accomplished multi-instrumentalist, singer, and songwriter, Lisa plays just about anything with strings and brings audiences to their feet with her gorgeous and powerful voice.
- From Mankato, Minnesota, **Matt Thompson** sets the audience at ease with his comfortable, warm style as emcee and wows them with his amazing instrumental virtuosity on the mandolin. He is largely responsible for the band’s original song arrangements and sings baritone harmony. A lifelong lover of bluegrass music, Matt brings not only his world-class musical talents to the band, but also his extensive knowledge of bluegrass history and tradition.