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## **Dr. James Robinson Music Guest of Honor**



Known to some at the “Tom Lehrer of science,” musical guest Dr. James Robinson (formerly Dr. Jane Robinson) is a Pegasus Award-winning performer whose songs focus on scientific disciplines, especially paleontology.

Robinson comes from a musical Maine family and learned to play the piano by ear at 5 years old. He sang tenor in the church choir, and in junior high school he learned the flute and piccolo to join the marching band. By the time he graduated from high school, he'd taught himself guitar and wrote and sang about biology and chemistry (“Battle With the Elements”).

After receiving his doctorate in biology from UCLA in 1976, he went on to teach at UC Berkeley and gave occasional benefit performances for Cal's Museum of Paleontology.

Robinson's first album, “Dr. Jane's Science Notes” (1987), was recorded for Off Centaur Publications, which focused on the musical style of filk, folk music that typically plays on sci-fi or fantasy themes. After the label folded, he repackaged “Science Notes” as “Wackademia” and released “Fossil Fever” in 1990. He also performed with his partner, filk artist Cynthia McQuillan. The two collaborated on several albums, including “Bedlam Cats” (1992).

He mostly retired from writing and performing in 1998, and was inducted into the Filk Hall of Fame on April 1, 2000. In 2004, Robinson underwent a sex-change procedure and took the name James. McQuillan upon meeting James for the first time said, "At last I get to meet the man I fell in love with!"

Robinson currently lives in Oakland with one gray cat and lots of happy houseplants. He has been self-employed as a massage therapist and bodyworker for 18 years. His performances at LosCon is dedicated to the memory of his and Jane's beloved friend and partner, Cynthia McQuillin.

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