

Nordic Voices

*in New York at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall
...on Super Bowl Sunday*

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Are You Ready for Some ... Nordic Voices?

By [JAMES BARRON](#) JAN. 31, 2014

Members of Nordic Voices, a group from Norway that is scheduled to perform Sunday evening at Carnegie Hall, rehearsing in Burlington, Vt., on Friday. From left are Ingrid Hanken, Ebba Rydh, Trond Reinholdtsen and Frank Havrøy. Told that their date coincided with the Super Bowl, Mr. Havrøy recalled, the group said, "Super what?"



Sunday promises to be a big night for Peyton Manning, the quarterback of the Denver Broncos; for Russell Wilson, his counterpart on the Seattle Seahawks; and for their teammates, competing in a stadium before 80,000 spectators and a television audience of more than 100 million people.

But Sunday also promises to be a big night for another group that is starring in the performance of its lifetime. [The six vocalists in](#) Nordic Voices waited 17 years for a concert date at Carnegie Hall, where musicians dream of appearing the way football players dream of playing in the Super Bowl — only to learn that they would not be the only game in town.

“Someone told us, ‘You know, there is something else going on at the same time in America, and it’s called the Super Bowl,’ ” Frank Havrøy, the baritone in the group, said by telephone from Oslo on Tuesday. “We said, ‘Super what?’ ”

New York is big, big enough for the big game — though it will actually be played in New Jersey — and big enough for other things to be happening on the same day, even at the same time.

In the morning, [Groundhog Day will be celebrated at the Staten Island Zoo](#). A spokesman for the zoo, Brian Morris, said Mayor Bill de Blasio had promised

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to attend the local version of the Punxsutawney Phil shadow-seeking event, apparently unafraid to face the zoo's resident groundhog, Charles G. Hogg, a.k.a. Chuck.

He bit Mr. de Blasio's predecessor, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, in 2009. Mayor Bloomberg did not forget. In 2011, with Chuck safely back in his carrier and the Groundhog Day ceremony almost over, Mr. Bloomberg was heard to say that the experience was vastly superior to having to reach in and let the little creature bite him.

Apparently, Mr. de Blasio knows all this. "We've warned him," Mr. Morris said on Friday. "We also have a pair of extremely thick, heavy gloves that go up his forearm. That should be protection."

So much for the part of Sunday that involves mayoral fingers and the potentially bared incisors of a sometimes temperamental rodent. In the afternoon, the Lunar New Year, the start of the Year of the Horse, will be celebrated with a parade in Chinatown.

And Sunday will bring another milestone, for it will be the city's 361st birthday. On Feb. 2, 1653, the leaders of the Dutch colony in Lower Manhattan signed a charter of incorporation for what was then known as New Amsterdam. That made it a city. The anniversary is being observed in contemporary fashion: The city's Department of Records will take note of it on Facebook, Twitter and [its own web page](#).

But the evening of the 33rd day of the 14th year of the 21st century, when the two teams in the Super Bowl will be on the field? Some have decided to sit this one out. Caroline's, the comedy club on Broadway, will be closed.

"The Super Bowl is tough to compete against," Greg Charles, the publicist for Caroline's, said. "Any venue that's having entertainment other than the Super Bowl, it's going to be tough."

The Gotham Comedy Club will also be dark on Sunday. "We seat 300," Chris Mazzilli, a founder of the club, said. "A hundred people in there is fine. But 10 or 15? They're not going to have a good time, and for the staff that night, I feel bad about making them work. Let's face facts. My staff wants to go watch the game."

John Medeski, the guest pianist with the Matt Wilson Quartet, which has two performances scheduled on Sunday night at Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, part of Jazz at Lincoln Center, said that appearing on Super Bowl Sunday was "probably worse than doing a gig on Christmas."

"On Christmas," Mr. Medeski said, "you can theme it in a way to get people to show up."

"We're all going to have wardrobe malfunctions," he joked.

Mr. Wilson said he had not realized when he booked the four-night run that the Sunday in question would be Super Bowl Sunday. "I'm not worried," he said. "There are people who don't pay

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that much attention to football. I've played in the past during the Super Bowl, and there were lots of people. It's New York. There'll be people there."

That is also the hope of Peter Bales, a standup comedian who is also an assistant professor at Queensborough Community College, and is scheduled to appear at Dangerfield's, on the Upper East Side. "Comedy must go on," he said. "I've got my act ready to go, and it has nothing whatsoever to do with the Super Bowl. I look at it this way. I would encourage my kids to go into standup comedy. I wouldn't encourage my kids to go into football. You can't get a concussion doing standup comedy."

Mr. Havrøy of Nordic Voices said he no longer remembered who had clued him in about the Super Bowl. The group flew from Oslo to New York on Thursday, then went to Burlington, Vt., for a concert on Friday.

Mr. Havrøy said the immigration officer at Kennedy International Airport asked what he was going to do while he was in this country. Mr. Havrøy mentioned Carnegie Hall, and when the group was to appear there, in the 268-seat Weill Recital Hall.

The officer interrupted him: "On Super Bowl Sunday!" He stamped Mr. Havrøy's visa and wished him luck.

"I invited him to the concert," Mr. Havrøy said, "but I don't think he will come."