

BIOS FOR PERFORMERS AT MULTICULTURAL VARIETY CONCERT ON SUNDAY, JULY 10, 2016 AT ST. JOHN'S ARTS AND CULTURE CENTRE

JAFRIN AHMED AND YEASEEF

Jafrin and Yeaseef are both from Bangladesh. A beautiful small country in South Asia with colors and natural beauty all around. Their culture is rich and roots back to several centuries. It includes numerous forms of Art, such as music, dance, drama, craft, folklore, literature and philosophy. Jafrin and Yeaseef will show their culture by singing *Rabindra Sangeet* and modern Bengali music.

CELTIC FIDDLERS

Celtic Fiddlers

Region: Newfoundland & Labrador

Genre: Traditional

The Celtic Fiddlers from St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, are a vibrant group of 13 young professional musicians, ages 14-24. This unique group of fiddlers is accompanied by piano, mandolin, mandola, tin whistle, Irish flute, bodhran, cajone, accordian, banjo, bouzouki, bass, voice, guitar and drums. They have gained an outstanding reputation for their eclectic style and presentation. Collectively the group has mastered 53 instruments!

The Celtic Fiddlers are members of the Music Industry Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's Folk Arts Society and the East Coast Music Association. The Celtic Fiddlers were awarded the Instrumental Artist of the Year for MUSICNL in 2006.

The Celtic Fiddlers recently returned from a tour of New York and were inspired by the great audiences at the Canadian Consulate, The Frying Pan, New Rochelle, and Ellis Island.

Under the direction of Korona Brophy, musician, arranger and teacher, the Celtic Fiddlers, formed in 1993, performed at a wide milieu of international, national and provincial conventions and festivals, local folk festivals and events, celebrations and weddings. In August, 2012, the Fiddlers travelled to Ireland for a performance tour with the Festival of the Sea. They were invited to festivals in Cork, Dungarven, Carrick-On-Suir, and Waterford. Additional tours in Ireland were in 1999, 2003 and 2008, to launch their CD's, "Passage" – a compilation CD of song, story and music of the Irish migration to Newfoundland; "The Sea in Our Eyes" – an instrumental collection of Newfoundland ballads, jigs and original works; and 'the Celtic Fiddlers ...a time for Christmas' – a beautiful collection of Christmas vocals and instrumental music. Their fourth CD, "Salt of the Earth", a tribute to Robyn Marie Peddle, (deceased member 1989-2009), was released in November, 2009. Their fifth cd "Times and Tides" was released in June, 2013. This 20 track cd celebrates our 20th anniversary and contains original and traditional vocal and instrumental pieces.

THE QUEEN OF PARADISE'S GARDEN

The Queen of Paradise's Garden - a Traditional Newfoundland Fairy Tale

A Puppet Show for All Ages

Written, Narrated, and Performed by Andy Jones

With Puppet and Set Construction and Design by Darka Erdelji

Puppeteer: Mary-Lynn Bernard

Music and Sound: Monique Tobin.

PRODUCTION HISTORY:

This show was first presented at the 2008 St. John's Storytelling Festival to an enthusiastic response. Since that time it has toured to over forty schools and theatres in Newfoundland and was presented by The Banff Centre, The National Arts Centre in Ottawa, The STAGES Festival in Halifax, the Toronto 'HarbourKIDS' Festival, Vertigo Theatre in Calgary, Market Hall Theatre in Peterborough, and the March Hare Festival in Corner Brook ...

THE PRODUCTION:

The performance lasts about 35 minutes (with an optional question and answer session at the end) and involves Andy Jones telling and performing a traditional Newfoundland folk-tale as he sits beside a kitchen-table sized box that becomes the set. This set has compartments that open and change and the box is turned around by Jones and puppeteer Mary Lynn Bernard to create scene changes as the story progresses.

The puppets are small hand held puppets which were designed and made by Slovenian theatre artist Darka Erdelji, who has her Masters in Puppet Scenography from the Akadmie Muzických Umeni in Prague. Actor Mary-Lynn Bernard is the puppeteer who brings the puppets to life. There are live sound effects and music performed in view of the audience by Monique Tobin. The audience is also invited to participate in creating the atmosphere.

This very adaptable and simply presented show (and its accompanying workshops) have been successfully presented to all ages and to diverse audiences in many, many settings. The story and the approach to its telling are from the older oral tradition, with Andy Jones acting the roles of different characters in the story as well as being the teller. This simple story-telling tradition combines beautifully with Darka Erdelji's understated Eastern European puppet theatre style.

SHOW SYNOPSIS:

The Queen Of Paradise's Garden tells the story of Jack, the standard-bearer of Newfoundland folktales, in his attempt to get a magic plant that will restore youth to his aging and very frail parents. In order to do this, he must find his way into the enchanted Garden of Paradise whose Queen he must charm in order to get the magic plant. Using his characteristic good humour, natural savvy, and sauciness, and with the help of a lot of equally generous strangers along his route he manages to steal the plant. However on his return he discovers he was gone a lot longer than he thought and he is no longer recognized by his family. In fact they think Jack is long dead. Jack plays along with this misapprehension, becomes the family's live-in cook and feeds his parents the magic plant. He is unmasked by the Queen of Paradise and is rewarded for his goodhearted impudence with the Queen's hand in marriage.

FOLKLORIC BACKGROUND:

The Queen of Paradise's Garden is a tale from the oral tradition. It exists in various forms in stories all over the world. This re-telling of the tale is based on a version told by Albert Heber Keeping of Grand Bank Newfoundland. Mr. Keeping's words were tape-recorded in 1965 by Herbert Halpert and Ronald Noseworthy. A transcript of that recording was published in the 2-volume *Folktales Of Newfoundland* by Herbert Halpert and John Widdowson and was the

basis for the adaptation by Andy Jones and Darka Erdelji.

BOLLYWOOD JIG

Bollywood Jig is a professional dance troupe in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada. They perform at cultural events, festivals, dance shows and private parties across the province, in other parts of Canada and also internationally. Founded by artistic director Sanchita Chakraborty, they have been making their mark on the province's dance scene since 2004.

Their choreography is as diverse as their dancers. They range in age from 10 to 35, hail from South Asia to Salmonier, and have training in everything from traditional Chinese dance to salsa and hip hop. Like ballet and bungee, it's dance that unites us.

“You’ve seen Jazz. You’ve seen MuchMusic. You’ve seen kids in a parking lot spinning on their heads. But if you haven’t watched us dance, you ain’t seen nothing yet.”

FERNANDO HERNANDEZ

Fernando Hernandez was born in Mexico City. He started studying guitar at a young age with Moises Guevara Rico, and developed his instrumental technique with several Professors: Severo Barrera (San Miguel de Allende), Alfredo Uribe (Queretaro), Juan Carlos Laguna, Francisco Gómez, Gonzalo Salazar and Alfredo Roveló (Mexico City).

He continued his studies at the Autonomous University of Queretaro School of Music, the National Centre for Arts Superior School of Music in Mexico City (INBA – CENART) and the National Autonomous University of México School of Music – UNAM, in Mexico City, where he obtained his Bachelor in Music Performance, with Honours.

In various international festivals he has had Master classes with Manuel Espinas (Cuba), Judicael Perröy (France), Gerardo Arriaga (Spain), David Tanenbaum (USA).

Fernando was awarded in the V musical composition contest “Fernando Loyola” of Autonomous University of Queretaro in 1999; later he received the Diplomas to the highest scores in his bachelor by The National School of Music, in both the year 2008 and 2009; also in those years, he was awarded the scholarship for performer artist offered by the Mexico City Secretary of Culture.

He has been involved in Chamber Music and Jazz projects, including a Guitar trio with José Miguel García and Jesús Chávez, a duo with Flute transverse player Jaet Garibaldi, the Chamber Ensemble Audire, the Jazz ensemble directed by Cuban Cellist Rolando Hernández, and several Guitar duos with: Pedro Ovalle, Mario Castillo, Daniel Ad-Jarid, José García and Oscar Membrillo; furthermore, he was member of National School of Music Guitar Orchestra under the supervision of Master Néstor Castañeda y León.

Currently he is pursuing a Master's degree in Music at Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's under the direction of Sylvie Proulx.

NEW CANADIAN VOICES – ASSOCIATION FOR NEW CANADIANS CHOIR

New Canadian Voices is a choir that is based out of The Association for New Canadians (ANC) ESL (English as a Second Language) school in St. John's, NL. Since 1989, the Association for New Canadians has been providing training to immigrants and refugees arriving to Newfoundland and Labrador, supporting newcomers through all aspects of

integrations. Originally, all the classes in the school got together informally to sing folk, ethnic and contemporary songs in English, providing a relaxed and fun atmosphere in which to further learn the language.

Eventually word spread that the ANC had a choir, and *New Canadian Voices*, which, depending on the performance venue, ranges from approximately 15 to 160 adult students (ranging in age from 20 to 70) from approximately 20 different countries, has since been asked to perform at various venues including Canada Day performances at Confederation Building, lunch-hour concerts at Government house in St. John's, the Canadian Citizenship Ceremony and on CBC's *The National*.

ALISON STANFORD

Alison was born originally in Sydney Nova Scotia but grew up in Newfoundland and Labrador most of my life. She started professionally singing/drumming last year with the Tombolo Multicultural Festival and International Festival in St. John's. She also part of the drum group with the Native Center in St. John's going on 3 years and even made her own drum. Alison is proud to be part Micmaq going way back in her family. Ishe also practices Native spiritually and she loves nature. She ahs taught as a professional private belly dancing teacher to youth and has been a professional belly dancer for a number of years thanks to the School of dance. Alison has also worked in film with Nifco for two films called **Frontier and Braven** which will be released on Netflix this September. Also featured in couple of commercials such as envelope of fortune for Jungle Jim's. Her latest goal was learning how to write screen plays and make my own movie which she completed.

ZIMBAMOTTO

Zimbamoto lays down mesmerizing and energetic grooves coming out of Zimbabwe via Vancouver, BC. Led my mbira/marimba master Kurai Mubaiwa, the band's mix of traditional/contemporary African music, vocal chants and infectious rhythms dare you to stay seated and still. The heart of the band's music is repertoire derived from two quintessentially African instruments: the mbira and marimba (xylophone). The mbira is a "thumb piano" that has been used for centuries in Zimbabwe, for healing and communion with the spiritual world, while the marimba is a central instrument instrument in communal musical activities in many cultures. These instruments are augmented by electric guitar, bass, drums and percussion played by some of Vancouver's finest, to provide an irresistible music and dance experience.

Band Members:

Kurai Mubaiwa : mbira, marimba, percussion, lead vocals

Curtis Andrews: drumkit, backing vocals

Mark Campbell: electric guitar, backing vocals

Greg Valou: bass guitar, backing vocals

Navaro Franco: percussion, movement

JING XIA

Jing Xia is a new ethnomusicology student in Memorial University of Newfoundland. Her study research focuses on the fusion music combing **guzheng** and improvised music. She was a **Guzheng** teacher and player when she was in China.

Guzheng is a Chinese traditional instrument and now it is played in some popular and modern ways. Also, instead of wooden **guzheng**, nowadays the electrical **guzheng** plays

important role in some performances.

Jing is looking for some collaboration opportunities with other instrument players.

INTERNATIONAL GOSPEL CHOIR OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (IGCNL)

- **Leader** : Dayo Ojo
- The choir started in 2012 with members from different nationalities in the world (Canadians, Asians, Africans, Americans etc). It is an open Choral group that constantly welcomes new members.
- The vision of the choir is to (in our own way) demonstrate how to worship God, and have His power manifested in the midst of the Congregation / Audience.
- Their song ministrations always aim to encourage the audience to participate so they can fully experience the fullness of joy radiating from the choir. There has been testimonies from people getting healed and transformed by the power of God as a result of this choir's musical ministrations.
- This is also a travelling Choral group that has been singing in different churches and events in Newfoundland.
- Churches and events where we have repeatedly ministered include, but is not limited to:
 - i) Bethesda Pentecostal Church
 - ii) Elim Pentecostal Tabernacle
 - iii) Victory Christian Centre
 - iv) Salvation Army Citadel
 - v) Park Avenue Pentecostal Church
 - vi) St Augustine Anglican Church
 - vii) Church on the Rock
 - viii) Tombolo Multicultural Festival

KAREN MONIE KWAINKWI

Karen Monie Kwainkwi is from Cameroon, West Africa. She is a singer/guitarist working on her Single. She moved to Canada when she was 18, where she studied at Carleton University, and later joined a local indie band in Ottawa, and spent a few years singing locally before moving to St. John's to study at MUN.

She's performed twice at MUN, and she writes music using storytelling and elements of blues and jazz, but for our show she'll be honouring two of her home country's greatest musicians who sing in one of the country's popular dialects, and French as well.

Songs she will be playing:

i). *Charlotte Dipanda - Kene so*

ii). *Henry Dikongue - C'est la vie*

MUNIRANIAN

MUNIranian Dance Group performs a traditional Persian dance with traditional cloths.

MUNIranian Dance Group has performed in not only Iranian traditional events during the years, but also in international events.

AHTISHAM YOUNAS

Ahtisham Younas is doing his graduate degree in Nursing at MUN. He is originally from Pakistan and has been in St. John's for only about 9 months.

He will be performing a short medley of Pakistani **Sufi** Music in traditional pop and rock style. **Sufi** music refers to music inspired by the poetry of **Sufi poets**. It reflects the culture of Pakistan and the sub-continent.

TODD SCOTT

Todd Scott is a singer, songwriter and musician originally from C.B.S, Newfoundland.

Performing and writing music since the age of sixteen, his musical style combines qualities of rock, pop, folk, and even country music. Todd regularly performs solo acoustic shows and as frontman in the band, "The Sleeveens" at countless venues, special events, and music festivals across Newfoundland. In 2015, Todd released his debut album; a culmination of his nearly 20 years experience as a working musician. The independently released "Define" features nine of Todd's original tracks and was nominated for MusicNL Pop/Rock recording of the year.

Fiona Margaret Shea:

With a fiddle the size of a tissue box, Fíona Shea began playing traditional Celtic music at the age of eight. The fiddler, singer and songwriter based in New Hampshire has played around the world, from Ireland to Newfoundland to Guatemala — and although her music is based in the Irish and Cape Breton styles, she's rooted in the traditional music of New England. Fíona has performed and led contra dance workshops at the Newfoundland and Labrador Folk Festival for the past five years, and has performed at the Boston Celtic Music Festival; she has twice attended the Gaelic College of Celtic Arts and Crafts; and traveled around Ireland playing in pubs. In 2014, she was awarded a grant through the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts to study traditional music as an apprentice to Jordan Tirrell-Wysocki.

Fiona might bellow an old sea shanty, sing an original ballad or play a rollicking new fiddle tune — and all with a new energy and a wee bit of edge.