

Appalachian State University's Office of Arts and Cultural Programs
presents

APPlause!

K-12 Performing Arts Series

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Natalie MacMaster & Donnell Leahy



As an integral part of the Performing Arts Series, APPlause! matinées offer a variety of performances at venues across the Appalachian State University campus that feature university-based artists as well as local, regional and world-renowned professional artists. These affordable performances offer access to a wide variety of art disciplines for K-12 students. The series also offers the opportunity for students from the Reich College of Education to view a field trip in action without having to leave campus. Among the 2017-2018 series performers, you will find those who will also be featured in the Performing Arts Series along with professional artists chosen specifically for our student audience as well as performances by campus groups.

Before the performance...

Familiarize your students with what it means to be a great audience member by introducing these theatre etiquette basics:

- Arrive early enough to find your seats and settle in before the show begins (20-30 minutes).
- Remember to turn your electronic devices OFF so they do not disturb the performers or other audience members.
- Remember to sit appropriately and to stay quiet so that the audience members around you can enjoy the show too.

PLEASE NOTE:

***THIS EVENT IS SCHEDULED TO LAST APPROX 60 MINUTES.**

10:00am – 11:00am

- Audience members arriving by car should plan to park in the Rivers Street Parking Deck. There is a small charge for parking. Buses should plan to park along Rivers Street – Please indicate to the Parking and Traffic Officer when you plan to move your bus (i.e. right after the show, or after lunch) so that they can help keep everyone safe.
- Adults meeting a school group at the show will be asked to sign in at the lobby and wait to be escorted to their group by a security guard.

**The following study guide was provided by
Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy**





Natalie MacMaster & Donnell Leahy

- STUDY GUIDE -

A superstar in the Celtic music world, fiddler and step-dancer, Natalie MacMaster has built a sterling career on electrifying live performances. While husband, Donnell Leahy is no stranger to the stage; his lifelong devotion to playing and performing has cemented his reputation as a peerless instrumentalist able to synthesize traditional influences with more contemporary Celtic sensibilities.

This study guide will prepare your students for their upcoming performance.

Your students can actively participate at the performance by:

- OBSERVING how the performers use their bodies while dancing and making music
- MARVELING at the skill demonstrated by the performers
- THINKING ABOUT all the practice that goes in to each act
- REFLECTING on the sounds, sights, and performance skills on display at the theater

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Performance Etiquette

Be prepared and arrive early.

Ideally you should arrive at the theater about 20 to 25 minutes before the show. Allow for travel time and parking, and plan to be in your seats at least 15 minutes before the performance begins.

Be aware and remain quiet.

It's best to stay quiet so that everyone can enjoy the performance without distractions.

Show appreciation by applauding.

Applause is the best way to show your enthusiasm and appreciation. Performers return their appreciation for your attention by bowing to the audience at the end of the show. It is always appropriate to applaud at the end of a performance, and it is customary to continue clapping until the curtain comes down or the house lights come up.

Participate by responding to the action onstage.

Sometimes during a performance, you may respond by laughing, crying or sighing. By all means, feel free to do so! Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form. Just remember to be courteous of the performers and those around you.

Concentrate to help the performers.

Performers use concentration to focus their energy while on stage. If the audience is focused while watching the performance, the artists feel supported and are able to do their best work. They can feel that you are with them.

About the Performance

Guiding Questions:

- What makes Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy's performance special?
- When do you think musicians start their training?
- What do you think you may see and hear at the performance?

The performance will feature many selections from “One”, Natalie and Donnell’s recording debut as a duo. It was a chance meeting with legendary producer Bob Ezrin (Pink Floyd, Alice Cooper, Deep Purple) — who recruited Justin Cortelyou (Taylor Swift, Ke\$ha, Alan Jackson) to co-produce — that led to the recording sessions in Cape Breton. The result is quite possibly the best fiddle album ever recorded. The album includes the first ever recorded versions of the original material that Natalie and Donnell have begun writing together, and these fit seamlessly alongside their refreshing reinterpretations of traditional and contemporary tunes they have discovered in their musical exploration.

About the Artists

Natalie MacMaster

Hailing from Cape Breton Island, Natalie received her first fiddle at the age of nine, launching a career that has lasted for over 30 years. She is of Nova Scotia's most important exports and a "superstar" in the Celtic music world. Her first recording was released when she was only 16 and she has never looked back. Natalie has received numerous awards in the US and Canada, recognizing her dedication, musical talent, and importance to Cape Breton's fiddling tradition and international identity. Natalie's performances leave her audiences craving more as she mystifies them through stylistic diversity without losing the traditional Cape Breton flair. Her stage presence, the elegance with the bow, the intricate technique with the fiddle, and the embrace of the Cape Breton tradition that wows her admirers at countless shows every year.

Donnell Leahy

Perfecting his astonishing talent since the age of three, Donnell has literally spent his entire life with a fiddle in his hand. His parents, a fiddle-playing father from Ontario and a step-dancing mother from Cape Breton, were his source of inspiration and guidance. As the musical leader & front-man of Leahy for over 15 years, it is no surprise his own style emerged; it is said he created a new genre of music simply known as "Leahy." Combined with his mesmerizingly strident, exultant, and high-energy performances, this style has become Donnell Leahy's musical signature.

MacMaster Leahy Kids - Mary Frances, Michael, Clare and Julia

The children all step dance and play fiddle, as well as a variety of other instruments. Their homeschooling allows the freedom to go on tour as a family and the kids often appear on stage with their parents. Their interests include hockey, soccer, sewing, and cooking, gymnastics and figure skating as well as playing with their little brother Alec and little sister Sadie. When not on the road they live the lifestyle of a typical Canadian farming family in their rural village home. The children made an appearance on the 2017 season of NBC's *Little Big Shot*.

About the Art Form

Guiding Questions:

- What kinds of instruments do the performers use?
- How is the Celtic culture reflected in the performance?

The Fiddle

A bowed string musical instrument, , a colloquial term for the violin and can be used by players in all genres of music from classical to Celtic to rock and roll. Fiddle playing refers to various style of music. The fiddle is part of many traditional folk styles of music which are taught through aural traditions (taught by ear) rather than written music.

Cape Breton Fiddling

Cape Breton fiddling is a regional violin style which falls within the Celtic music world. It was brought to North America by Scottish immigrants during the Highlands Clearances. These immigrants were primarily Gaelic-speaking. Although fiddling in Scotland has changed considerably, the tradition of Scottish fiddle music has been preserved in Cape Breton.

This style of music is highly accented, characterized by driven up-bowing and is strongly influenced by the intonations of the Scots-Gaelic language.

Resources:

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/fiddling-emc/>

<http://www.natalieanddonnell.com/home/natalie-donnell-family/>