Second Sunday Folk Dances Celebrates 35th Season

The Second Sunday Folk Dance series celebrates its 35th year of great music. One of the Midwest’s most popular venues for folk music and dance, the Second Sunday series is the largest, longest running event of its kind, presenting great musicians in an intimate setting. Dean and Bette Premo (White Water) organize and host the concert series, described at its website, www.secondsundayfolkdance.com.

All but one of the seven concert/dance experiences will once again return to Second Sunday’s original home at the Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp dining hall. The nearly 90-year-old camp was founded during the Great Depression. For the second time, the historic Crystal Theater in downtown Crystal Falls will host an event, December’s concert with the Laurel Premo Trio.

The Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp is located between Iron River and Crystal Falls (in Iron County, Michigan), 2 miles west of Crystal Falls on US-2. Turn south on Bible Camp Road and drive for less than a quarter mile. Turn right on Fortune Lake Camp Road, drive just a short distance, and look for parking.

The Crystal Theater (December’s event) is located on Superior Ave. about half way down the hill from Crystal Falls’ iconic County Courthouse building. Parking is in the back or on city streets.

Each event opens at 4 PM Central Time with a short opening set by White Water, followed immediately by the featured guest act’s concert. Except for the special Crystal Theater December event, the second half of the event is devoted to dancing in many forms with music by the Front Parlor Dance Band and dances taught by Bette Premo and others. Refreshments are available at each dance, and the entertainment lasts until 7 PM. Admission for those over 15 is $7 and children 15 and under are admitted free. For more information about the folk event call 906-822-7889. The exciting lineup for the 2019-20 Second Sunday season include:

October 13 - Johnsmith

For the past thirty-plus years, Johnsmith has been sharing his music all across America and abroad. He has become a favorite at festivals, clubs, and house concerts alike. In addition to being a Kerrville New Folk Winner, Johnsmith has released eight solo CDs to rave reviews, leads musical tours to Ireland, teaches songwriting, and has served as a staff songwriter in Nashville. With his faded jeans, his twinkly blue eyes, and his infectious smile, John immediately connects with audiences. You get the sense of a man who loves his life, his family and friends, and who loves nothing more than sharing that love in song and stories all across this land. Vist his website at www.johnsmithmusic.com.

November 10 - Gerry O’Beirne

Born in Ennis, County Clare, along Ireland’s music-rich west coast, Gerry O’Beirne is a renowned singer, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist (6 and 12 string guitar, tiple, and ukulele, slide guitar among others). He grew up in Ireland and in Ghana in West Africa, and has since lived in England, California, and Mexico. His own compositions blend the passion found in traditional music with the freshness of contemporary song. Gerry has toured in Europe, Australia, New Zealand and the USA, performed solo at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, and has taught musical composition from visual art at Swannanoa Music Camp. He has performed at the White House, opened for the Grateful Dead, played electric guitar with Marianne Faithfull and thought nothing of playing with a Romanian orchestra and choir in a cemetery in Transylvania at night. He has written music for film and theatre and appeared on Garrison Keillor’s A Prairie Home Companion. Recently he has been working with New York composer Peter Gordon on a recording of the music of the legendary Arthur Russell, and recorded recently with Peter Gordon and Tim Burgess of the Charlatans. His website is www.gerryobeirne.com.

Sponsors Sought for Support

Second Sunday Folk Dance organizers seek funds to foster the activities and underwrite the expenses of guest artists, many of whom travel hundreds of miles to perform.


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December 8 – The Laurel Premo Trio  
(at the Crystal Theater)

This concert will occur at the Crystal Theatre. Laurel Premo presents a new instrumental project diving deep into traditional and new fiddle music and musically revealing a bloom of underlying harmonic drones, minimalist repetition, and rich polyrhythms. Responding to Premo’s fiddling is the metrical yet wavelike sustain of electric and acoustic guitar and an extreme double fiddle – double bass. Laurel Premo is fully leaning in to the archaic fiddle melodies and in-between intonations that connect folk sounds to the mystic and unknown. For this concert Laurel will be joined by Shari Kane (guitar) and Jacob Warren (bass). Find out more at www.laurelpremo.com/music.

January 12 – Mark Dvorak

Mark Dvorak is a modern day troubadour who has never stopped performing, writing and recording. He has been called “a folk singer’s folk singer” with an “encyclopedic knowledge of traditional songs.” His song writing has been called “wondrous” and “profound.” Since 1981, Mark has performed in nearly all the United States, and has visited several European countries. His concerts are a mix of the familiar and the new, traditional folk and standards from the American songbook. He plays authentic country blues guitar and plays great old-time banjo. Mark enjoys involving his audiences in sing-along songs and he mixes in his own well-crafted and often poignant originals. Mark has a refreshing, down-to-earth stage presence and is a very engaging performer. Dvorak continues to be an integral member of the faculty at Chicago’s venerable Old Town School of Folk Music. Since 1986, thousands of music students have passed through his classes. He has helped many a beginner get through their first chords and strums. He has hosted a catalogue of master classes and workshops on a range of subjects from old time banjo picking to the legacy of the great Lead Belly. Visit his website, www.markdvorak.com.

February 9 – Norah Rendell and Brian Miller

Chicago Irish American News has named Norah Rendell “Best Female Vocalist of 2016” in their annual Top Tradition In Review awards. This is Norah’s third time winning this award as a soloist (she was named “Best Female Vocalist” in 2001 and 2012), this time alongside legendary Irish and folk music artists such as Maire Ni Chathaigh, Buttons and Bows, Colin Farrell and James Keelaghan.” Norah is also an amazing flutist, and yet she somehow finds time for family AND running one of the most successful music schools in America, The Center for Irish Music in St. Paul. Norah’s husband, Brian Miller’s work as an accompanist has been called “superb” by no less an authority than the Irish Times. A highly visible character in the Twin Cities Irish music scene since 1998, he often sneaks away to his adopted home of Ireland, where he has been featured on TG4, RTE television and RTE radio. He is also a member of a number of international touring groups and duos including The Lost Forty that appeared on the Second Sunday stage (Crystal Theater) last December 2018. Visit Norah’s website at www.norahrendell.com/norah.

March 8 – Stas Vanglevski and Misha Litvin

Stas Vanglevski and Misha Litvin are both musically stunning and have a wonderful stage presence and incredible rapport with the audience. Their music ranges from classical, to folk, to traditional. Stas plays the Bayan, a Russian version of the accordion. Misha is a master mandolinist and a master of the Domro (a Russian mandolin). Misha is a professor of mandolin at the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music. He is originally from Minsk, Belarus and holds a masters degree in orchestra conducting and music education. Stas has toured extensively as a soloist throughout the former Soviet Union, Canada, Europe, and the United States including numerous performances with Doc Severinsen, Steve Allen and with Garrison Keillor on the Prairie Home Companion Show. Additionally, he has performed with symphony orchestras throughout the United States. Visit Stas on the web, www.stasv.com.

April 5 – May Erlewine

(Please note this event will be held on the First Sunday so as not to conflict with Easter).

Some people might call May Erlewine “Michigan’s Songbird,” but her songs have traveled far beyond her home state. One of the most prolific and passionate songwriters of her generation, May’s music has touched the hearts of people all over the world. Her words have held solace for weary hearts, offered a light in the darkness and held a lot of space for the pain and joy of being alive in these times. Her songs show a very real connection and concern with everyday folk. May Erlewine is no stranger to the recording studio and continues to write and record songs for the times. Her catalog has substance and her creative vision is expansive. Her songs have been sung by national acts, including Joshua Davis, Rani Arbo and Daisy Mayhem, Sawyer Fredericks (NBC’s The Voice), Railroad Earth, Greensky Bluegrass, Lindsay Lou and the Flatbellys and the list goes on. Please visit May’s website at www.mayerlewine.com.