

John Weed and Stuart Mason

exploring the roots of traditional Irish and Appalachian tunes and songs

John Weed and Stuart Mason play traditional tunes and songs that explore the musical connection between Ireland and Appalachia. A classically trained violinist, John leverages his understanding of the instrument to wrestle every last bit of tone and emotion from each piece he performs. Stuart is known for his strong, rhythmic guitar backup style using both standard and alternate tunings, and his songs are deeply rooted in the tradition. Together they create traditional music that is magical and entertaining for all ages.

John Weed began his classical training on violin at the age of nine, and immediately fell in love with the instrument. As a result, he spent many solitary hours in a practice room and performed with various symphony groups during his formative years. After hearing fiddler Dale Russ at a local tavern, John was introduced to the world of traditional Irish music. John followed the tradition to its roots. Doors opened up when he went to Ireland for the first time, and as the result of a chance meeting with legendary Clare flute player Bill McNamara, John returned to Ireland the following summer to study and perform with Bill for six months. During this time John expanded his repertoire and developed a deeper understanding of the tradition. To the delight of many listeners, he returned from Ireland with an authentic, rooted fiddling style that compliments his forays into bluegrass, swing, and American old-time music.

Stuart Mason was born in the hills of West Virginia and has been playing traditional music on stage for over 30 years. Right out of high school, he supported himself playing bluegrass and country music in the bars and festivals around Cincinnati, Ohio. From there he explored the traditional music of West Virginia as he lived in Upshur County and traveled to local fairs and festivals from the eastern panhandle to the Kentucky border. Somewhere deep beneath the mountain fiddling of Appalachia, he uncovered Irish music, and it became a lifelong passion. In 2002 he had the opportunity to perform on stage at the Feakle International Music Festival in Ireland with the Rattlesnake Creek String Band as well as distinguished East Clare fiddler Vincent Griffin.

John and Stuart have performed separately at many venues from Ireland to Hawaii, and together at the Calaveras Celtic Fair, the KVMR Celtic Festival in Grass Valley, and Duffy's Tavern in Chico.

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