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Ken & Brad Kolodner Trio, with Rachel Eddy, February 27, 2017

Lawrence University

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WORLD MUSIC SERIES

Ken & Brad Kolodner Trio with Rachel Eddy
Ken & Brad Kolodner Trio
with Rachel Eddy

Monday, Feb. 27, 2017
Harper Hall, Music-Drama Center

Brief intermission

Many of the pieces in today’s performance are “traditional” in the sense that the composers are unknown and passed along from generation to generation via the aural tradition. Many of the tunes date back centuries and are truly “oldies.” The repertoire is drawn from what is known today by practitioners of the music as “old-time” which is a style of North American music that preceded bluegrass, dating back several centuries with strong African and Celtic roots. Brad, Ken and Rachel compose music in the “old-time” style and Celtic styles.

The history of the selections will be announced from the stage and will be drawn from the following:

- Turkey in the Peapatch (Traditional old-time)
- I've Endured (Ola Belle Reed)
- Otter Creek (Brad Kolodner)
- Coleman's March (Traditional old-time)/Snake River Reel (Peter Lippincott)
- Chilly Winds (Traditional old-time)
- Deep Ellum Blues (Traditional American)
- Peeler Creek (Traditional old-time)
- Swift House (Ken Kolodner)
- Down on my Knees (Traditional old-time)
- Five Miles of Ellum Wood (Traditional old-time)
- Steel Rail Blues (Gordon Lightfoot)
- Jordan is a Hard Road (Dan Emmett, 1853)
- Planxty Fanny Power (Turlough O’Carolan, 1670–1738, Ireland)
- Cousin Sally Brown (Traditional old-time)
- Hop High (Traditional old-time)
- Liza Jane/Old Yeller Dog Come Trottin' Through the Meeting House/Sandy Boys (Traditional old-time)/Bradley's Tune (Brad Kolodner)

Ken Kolodner: hammered dulcimer, hammered mbira, fiddle
Brad Kolodner: clawhammer banjo, gourd banjo, banjola, guitar, fiddle, vocals
Rachel Eddy: fiddle, guitar, clawhammer banjo, vocals
The dynamic father-son duo Ken and Brad Kolodner weave together a captivating soundscape on hammered dulcimer, banjo and fiddles, pushing the boundaries of the old-time tradition into uncharted territory. Regarded as one of the most influential hammered dulcimer players and old-time fiddlers in North America, Baltimore’s Ken Kolodner ’76 has joined forces with his son Brad Kolodner, a rising star in the clawhammer banjo world. Together, they infuse their own brand of driving, innovative, tasteful and unique interpretations of traditional and original fiddle tunes and songs. They perform tight and musical arrangements of original and traditional old-time music with a “creative curiosity that lets all listeners know that a passion for traditional music yet thrives in every generation.” In concert, they regularly perform as a trio with bassist Alex Lacquement who locks everything together with his commanding and tasteful choices. They also perform on occasion with multi-instrumentalist Rachel Eddy (fiddle, banjo, guitar and vocals), a former member of the old-time supergroup Uncle Earl.

Ken’s musical journey began in the 1980s when he taught himself to play the fiddle. The hammered dulcimer followed shortly thereafter. He is a founding member of the world folk music trio Helicon with Chris Norman and Robin Bullock. Born in 1990, Brad grew up around his father’s music. It was only a matter of time before he picked up an instrument. In the summer of 2007, Brad took an introductory banjo class at a music camp in Maine. He was instantly hooked. Ken and Brad initially expected they would focus primarily on the fiddle and banjo combination, the classic pairing in old-time music. They experimented with the hammered dulcimer and banjo pairing and recognized they were on the edge of a musical breakthrough. Ken and Brad are locked in from the second the mallet hits and the nail strikes the strings. They have a creative bond and danceable groove that is unmistakable.

The duo started performing regularly in 2009. Two years later, they released their first recording, Otter Creek, which became the most played instrumental recording on the international Folk-DJ Radio charts. Brad’s original composition Otter Creek was the most played instrumental on the charts. Through performance and on the strength of Brad’s first recording, the recently named Strathmore Hall Artist in Residence and WAMU Bluegrass Country DJ has rapidly gained national recognition for his delicate touch and writing. Ken and Brad released Skipping Rocks, their second album, in September 2013. It “is both technically impressive and musically tasteful, a lovely exploration of both tradition and creativity (and of a warm musical relationship),” writes Rick Anderson of CD Hotlist. Skipping Rocks debuted at No. 4 on the Folk-DJ Charts and in the top 20 on the Roots Music Charts.

Wisconsin DJ Mark Pedersen writes: “Ken is regarded as one of the most accomplished hammered dulcimer players performing today. While not easy to describe, Otter Creek is all instrumental of traditional Appalachian music with hammered dulcimer, fiddle and banjo. What makes this recording special is that Ken collaborates with his son Brad who plays the banjo and banjola. It is what folk music is all about in my opinion.” Dulcimer Player News writes “This is old-time music played in the purest way.” A recent review by Sing Out! writes “Ken Kolodner is a world class multi-instrumentalist. ... Otter Creek is a joyous recording featuring two fine musicians who play excellently. There must be something special to that father-son thing.” The Old Time Herald writes, “Father and son have reached that musical telepathy that family members can sometimes achieve.”

Among Ken’s many credits are a featured solo in an Emmy-nominated CBS Christmas special, over a dozen recordings with sales well over 150,000, an “Indie” winner for Best Seasonal Recording in 1999, a No. 1 World Music title (Walking Stones) and bestseller for BMG (with over 55,000 copies sold) and numerous books and instructional recordings (including a book/CD on old-time fiddling for Mel Bay and two recent books on arranging for the hammered dulcimer, also for Mel Bay). Ken toured with the world music trio Helicon for over a decade and continued to tour as a soloist. He was the first, and remains the only U.S. player to be invited to play at the International Hackbrett Festival in Germany along with the world’s best players. His extensive repertoire of thousands of pieces includes the traditional music from over 30 countries on all continents. Ken has performed in every state in the U.S. and teaches locally in Baltimore with over 75 fiddle and hammered dulcimer students. His three-week Sandbridge Dulcimer Retreats are attended by up to 60 players from all over the U.S. and beyond (sandbridgedulcimer.com).

Music was not always in Ken’s vision. Kolodner graduated from Lawrence University in 1976 and a few years later pursued a career in public health, working on a Ph.D. in epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. While in grad school, he taught himself first to play the fiddle by listening to recordings. A few years later, he discovered the
hammered dulcimer and quickly became recognized among a handful of the best in the U.S. Since completing his Ph.D. at Hopkins, he has worked primarily as a musician (touring as many as 140 dates a year) but has continued to consult in public health and has published widely, with over 100 articles in medical journals.

Brad didn’t start playing banjo until age 17, when he attended a music camp where his father was teaching. After just two years, Brad won the 2010 Takoma Park Old-Time Banjo Festival Contest, earning a Kevin Enoch banjo and a performance spot at The Birchmere, sharing the stage with banjo legends Tony Trischka, Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer, Adam Hurt and others. In 2012, Brad won first place in old-time banjo at the prestigious Lowell Fiddle and Banjo Contest. In the summer of 2013, Brad won the inaugural Banjo Hangout National Clawhammer Banjo Contest. His version of Boatman was the highest-rated submission out of all 69 entrants. Most recently, Brad was a finalist at the prestigious Appalachian String Band Festival (Clifftop) for old-time banjo. Brad guest-recorded on Out of the Wood, a 2011 release by Elke Baker (a Scottish National Fiddle Champion) and his father. Brad graduated from Ithaca College with a degree in television/radio in 2012. In the summer of 2013, Brad signed on as the host of The Brad Kolodner Show, a weekly bluegrass show on WAMU’s Bluegrass Country, a 24/7 bluegrass radio station in Washington D.C. Brad has amassed a stable of over 30 banjo students in Baltimore. He has added fiddle, guitar and vocals to his repertoire.

In addition to performing and teaching, Ken and Brad are avid supporters and developers of the old-time community in Baltimore. In the spring of 2013, Ken and Brad founded the wildly popular Baltimore Old Time Jam, a biweekly gathering of dozens of musicians and old-time music fans at Liam Flynn’s Ale House in the heart of Baltimore City. In November 2013, Brad spearheaded the launch of the bimonthly Baltimore Square Dance at Mobtown Ballroom. The first two dances were packed with over 200 people at each one.

Rachel Eddy hails from West Virginia, where she grew up steeped in Appalachian music and dance. Rachel’s multi-instrumental talents and soulful singing bring an incredibly powerful energy to the group. In addition to her work with Ken and Brad, Rachel performs as a soloist and tours with The Early Mays. Rachel was born and raised in rural West Virginia just south of Morgantown, where her musical family inspired her to play and sing as a little girl. She grew up listening to local fiddlers, her father among them, going to old-time festivals and attending square dances. The old-time bug bit her early in life and Rachel now performs and teaches full time on fiddle, banjo, guitar, mandolin and bass. She has recently relocated back to West Virginia after living the last five years in Stockholm. During that time, she invigorated the Swedish old-time scene, inspiring dozens of people to learn Appalachian music and dance. In addition to being a performer, Rachel is passionate about teaching. She has taught fiddle, banjo and guitar at the Augusta Heritage Center in Elkins, W.Va., at Sore Fingers Summer school in the United Kingdom and different various weekend workshops from the hills of West Virginia to Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, London and Wales. Rachel’s love of music comes from the heart and she loves every part of her job from performing to educating dedicated students and the electrifying charge of playing in jam sessions around the world!

Over the years, she has had the honor of sharing stages, workshops and recording sessions with the likes of Tim O’Brien, Erynn Marshall, Dirk Powell, Adam Hurt, Rayna Gellert, Russ Barenberg, Bruce Molsky, Mark Schatz and a monthlong tour in Germany with the g’earls from Uncle Earl! She has four full length albums.

racheleddy.com
WORLD MUSIC SERIES 2016–17

Huun Huur Tu
Monday, Sept. 26, 2016, 8 p.m.
Stansbury Theatre

Kane Mathis Duo
Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2017, 8 p.m.
Harper Hall

Ken and Brad Kolodner with Rachel Eddy, 
hammered dulcimer, banjo and fiddle
Monday, Feb. 27, 2017, 8 p.m.
Harper Hall

Zakir Hussain with Rahul Sharma
Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 8 p.m.
Memorial Chapel

LU Gamelan Performance
Sunday, May 21, 2017, 1 p.m.
Memorial Chapel
World Music Series: Ken & Brad Kolodner Trio with Rachel Eddy
Monday, February 27, 2017
8:00 p.m.
Harper Hall

I’ve Endured (Ola Belle Reed)
Coleman’s March (Traditional old-time)/Snake River Reel (Peter Lippincott)

Otter Creek (Brad Kolodner)

The Reunion/Lost Indian

Deep Ellum Blues (Traditional American)

Swift House (Ken Kolodner)
Peeler Creek (Traditional old-time)

Down on my Knees (Traditional old-time)

Chilly Winds (Traditional old-time)

Jordan is a Hard Road (Dan Emmett)

Fanny Power (Turlough O’Carolan)
Cousin Sally Brown (Traditional old-time)

Steel Rail Blues (Gordon Lightfoot)

Hop High (Traditional old-time)

Liza Jane/Old Yeller Dog Come Trottin’ Through the Meeting House/Sandy Boys (Traditional old-time)/Bradley’s Tune (Brad Kolodner)