



BILLINGS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & CHORALE

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Billings Symphony Orchestra joined by Acoustic Champions Jay Ungar and Molly Mason

Billings, MT — The Billings Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Maestra Anne Harrigan, is joined by Jay Ungar and Molly Mason for *Harvest Home*, an evening of hauntingly beautiful American traditional music, on Saturday, October 11, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. at the Alberta Bair Theater. "Concert Cues," a half hour interactive discussion of the evening's musical selections led by local personality Margin Granger with Jay and Molly, begins at 6:45 p.m. and is free to all ticket holders.

Known by legions of fans for their appearances on National Public Radio's *A Prairie Home Companion*, work on movie soundtracks like *Legends of the Fall* and Ken Burn's public television series *The Civil War*, Ungar and Mason will perform selections from their many recorded albums, including *Lover's Waltz*, *Legends of the Fall* and *Ashokan Farewell*, which has become a fiddle standard since becoming the theme music for *The Civil War*.

"Jay and Molly make music that is simple and overwhelming...joyful and full of feeling...and apotheosis of American traditional music," says Garrison Keillor, host and creator of NPR's *A Prairie Home Companion*.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette says, "Mason and Ungar complement each other like a finely crafted fiddle and bow. Together they wave a rich postmodern musical magic carpet on which listeners may vicariously glide back in time and experience first-hand the sonorous riches of traditional music."

Joining Ungar and Mason from the orchestra is Trevor Krieger, a firefighter well-known locally for his fine fiddle playing.

Harvest Home is sponsored by Energy Industry Partners, a collaboration of Augustus Energy Partners, LLC; Ballard Petroleum Holdings, LLC; CHS Refinery, Pipelines & Terminals; Competition Wireline Services / Martin & Judy O'Neil; Energy Consultants, LLC; FH Petroleum Corp.; Thomas and Kim Hauptman; Don and Pam Havig; Hohn Engineering, LLC / Tom Hohn; Holiday Station Stores; Montana & Wyoming Oil Company; Nance Resources, LLC / Robert Nance and Brian Cebull; Sands Oil Company; Bill and Liz Fulton; Sanjel (USA) Inc.; Ralph and Tancy Spence, Jr.; St. Mary Land & Exploration; and Welter Consulting, Inc. / Corey Welter. Additional funding by a grant from the Montana Arts Council, an agency of the state government, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Charles M. Bair Family Trust.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call the Symphony office at (406) 252-3610 or visit www.billingsymphony.org. Ticket prices range from \$20 to \$43. Student discounts are available with a valid I.D.

About Jay Ungar and Molly Mason : *He was a Bronx kid. She grew up in Washington State. He was raised on pop music of the 1940s and '50s. She had a fondness for traditional fiddle music and '30s and '40s popular tunes. He hung out in Greenwich Village coffeehouses and roamed North Carolina and Tennessee in search of traditional players. She played clubs and colleges on the West Coast and took a liking to the jazzy sound of the Swing Era. Since joining forces—both artistically and romantically (the two would marry in 1991)—Jay Ungar and Molly Mason have become one of the most celebrated duos on the American acoustic music scene.*

It started with a chance meeting in the late 1970s when each was performing at a rural New York club. They hit it off musically and played together from time to time until Molly headed off to Minnesota to work in the house band of a new radio show, Garrison Keillor's A Prairie Home Companion. Meanwhile, back in New York, Jay put together a band Fiddle Fever, and when they needed a bassist, Molly signed on.

The early '80s also saw the beginning of Jay's Ashokan Fiddle & Dance Camps, a world-renowned destination for enthusiasts of American music and dance traditions. Several years later, Molly became a full partner in designing and running these programs, which are still going strong.

1984 found Fiddle Fever band members Matt Glaser and Russ Barenberg working with a young filmmaker on a documentary called The Brooklyn Bridge. They gave Ken Burns a copy of Fiddle Fever's second LP, Waltz of the Wind, which included Jay's Ashokan Farewell. Burns was so taken with the evocative and haunting melody, he used it in his next film, Huey, about Louisiana Governor Huey Long, and he wound up inviting Jay and Molly to provide music for many of his projects. The high point to date of this long relationship was the selection of Ashokan Farewell as the main theme of Burns' landmark PBS documentary The Civil War. The result: an Emmy nomination for Jay and a Grammy for the soundtrack album. And the tune seems to have taken on a life of its own. Now considered an American "folk" classic, it is played by fiddlers and classical musicians worldwide.

Perhaps the duo's best-known composition is the title track of The Lovers' Waltz, an album of romantic fiddle music from Appalachian, Scandinavian, Celtic, Klezmer and Swing traditions. The CD also features a medley of melodies written by composer James Horner—ones that Jay had previously performed with the London Symphony in Horner's score for the Sony Tristar film Legends of the Fall. Harvest Home, Jay and Molly's

1999 release, culminates in their 20-minute orchestral work, The Harvest Home Suite, in which they are joined by the Nashville Chamber Orchestra.

Jay and Molly have appeared on numerous radio and television shows. They continue to broadcast their own live-performance radio show, Dancing on the Air.

About the Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale: *Since the founding of the Billings Symphony Society in May of 1951, the organization's mission has been to enhance the quality of life in this part of the Rocky Mountain Northwest by offering musical enlightenment and intellectual stimulation to traditional audiences, as well as those who are geographically isolated, economically challenged and culturally underserved. Today, fifty-seven years later, that mission remains the driving force behind the Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale (BSO&C), the only symphonic orchestra and chorale serving a regional population of 400,000 people located throughout south central Montana and northeastern Wyoming. Music Director Anne Harrigan, along with the 135+ members of the BSO&C present an annual season from September through June, featuring six subscription concerts, two performances of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker with the accompaniment of a renowned ballet company, a New Year's Eve event, four performances of an annual free Family Concert and a free Symphony in the Park concert. Each season, the BSO&C perform for more than 35,000 people, and help introduce music to children, youth, adults, and seniors in the region through Explore Music!, the organization's music education and community engagement program.*

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