

BILLINGS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & CHORALE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Jeremy Kittel, Billings' favorite fiddler, violinist, and Celtic influenced composer, is bringing some friends to celebrate the Holiday season.

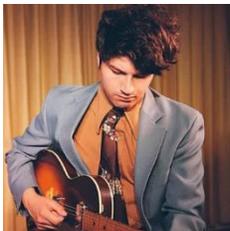
BILLINGS MT- Celebrate the Christmas season with Billings' favorite fiddler, Jeremy Kittel and friends, in ***Celtic Christmas*** Saturday, December 21 at the Lincoln Center. Show begins at 7:30 pm, with Concert Cues, an interactive pre-show discussion, beginning at 6:45 pm. Tickets range from \$10 to \$52 depending on seat location.



Jeremy Kittel

An American violinist/fiddler, Jeremy Kittel just received a Grammy nomination for best arrangement/composition. He has been placed in the community alongside many prevalent composers such as Alan Silvestri and John Williams. Fluent in multiple music genres, Kittel composes original music that draws from traditional roots, jazz, Celtic, classical, electronic, and more.

Kittel performs with his group, Kittel & Co., as a soloist with orchestras, and in collaborative and supporting roles with many of today's leading artists. He has worked with Abigail Washburn and Bela Fleck, My Morning Jacket, Aoife O'Donovan, Jars of Clay, and Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble. He was also a part of the Grammy Award-winning Turtle Island Quartet for 5 years. This is Jeremy Kittel's second appearance with the Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale, having performed in December 2015's *Celtic Christmas*.



Quinn Bachand

Kittel & Co.'s guitarist Quinn Bachand began performing the acoustic guitar around the world at age 11. By 17 he played over a dozen different instruments, recording and producing albums with his sister Qristina. The duo quickly rose to the top of the international Celtic music world, and together they have won two Irish Music Awards: 2010 Top Traditional Group and 2011 Top Duo. With diverse musical talents and a bottomless pool of creativity, Bachand has been dubbed the "Young Lion" of the Celtic guitar (Daniel Lapp) and "Canada's top Celtic guitarist" (Ashley MacIsaac). His contemporary edge to traditional Celtic music has sparked worldwide attention. An in-demand sideman, Bachand has toured nationally and internationally. He is also the front man of gypsy jazz band Brishen, singing and playing lead guitar, violin, and tenor banjo.



Cillian Vallely

Cillian Vallely is the uilleann pipes and low whistle player of the renowned Irish band Lúnasa, described as "the hottest Celtic band on the planet" (Irish Voice). In recent years, he has played and recorded with Bruce Springsteen, Natalie Merchant, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Tim O'Brien, and Riverdance, in addition to recording as a guest on over 50 albums. With Lúnasa, he has performed at the Hollywood Bowl, Glastonbury Festival, WOMADelaide, Edmonton Folk Festival, as

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well as multiple tours of Asia, Australia, US and Europe. “Vallely, whose family has played a seminal role in piping and Irish music in the north of Ireland for years, shows why he is one of the most respected pipers playing today” (Irish Voice).



Elizabeth (“Zee”) Ní Bhraonáin, TCRG

Zee Ní Bhraonáin hails from Grand Rapids, Michigan where she owns and operates her own CLRG certified Irish dancing school Scoil Rince Ní Bhraonáin. Not only is Zee a certified TCRG, but she has taught Regional winning, National, and World qualifying dancers. When she isn't teaching, she absolutely adores performing! Originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, Zee grew up performing with groups such as the Black Brothers, Culann's Hounds, and Tempest. After moving to the mid-west, she has had many performance opportunities, including having the pleasure of dancing with the Battle Creek Symphony Orchestra as well as choreographing for Cathie Ryan, formerly of Cherish the Ladies. Growing up in a household with a 9th generation Dublin-born father meant that there was no shortage of Irish music. In her 25 years of dancing, she has always carried these words in her heart, “If it weren't for the Irish music, we wouldn't be Irish dancing.”



Erin Small

Erin Small is a prominent teacher, conductor and performer within the Billings community. She is an elementary music teacher for the Billings district, and joyfully serves over 750 children per week. She is also the director of Yellowstone Valley Voices, which is an advanced choral program for young singers throughout the valley. Over the last decade, Erin has performed with various local organizations such as; Venture Theatre, Billings Studio Theatre, Rimrock Opera and the High Plains Chamber Singers. In 2016, she made her debut with the Billings Symphony performing as a guest artist for the Holiday Pops performance. She is thrilled to perform once again and considers it an honor to work with such amazing musicians.

About Jacqueline Curtis Low, ADCRG Claddagh Irish Dance Academy

Dublin, Ireland native Jacqueline Curtis Low started dancing at the age of nine and immediately fell in love with it. After 25 years of teaching dance professionally in Ireland, Jacqueline and her husband relocated to Billings, where she opened the Claddagh Irish Dance Academy in 2014. In addition to being the teacher, artistic director, and choreographer of her school, Jacqueline is a member of the largest Irish dance organizations in the world—*Comhdháil na Múinteoirí le Rincí Gaelacha Teoranta* (Congress of Irish Dance Teachers)—and currently serves as Chairperson of the Branch of the Americas.

The Claddagh Irish Dance Academy encourages and promotes the art and practice of traditional and authentic Irish Dancing. Jacqueline prepares her pupils for *feiseanna* (competitions), displays, and shows. In recent years the Claddagh Dancers have been busy with numerous performances, entertaining and wowing audiences with their traditional and contemporary dance routines. Visit claddaghirishdance.com to learn more about the Academy, upcoming performances or available classes!



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Celtic Christmas is sponsored by Northwest Pipe Fitting with Randy & Cheryl Bentley. Our guest artists are sponsored by our Energy Sponsors: Holiday Station Stores, Sands Oil Company, Spence Accounts, CHS Inc, Ballard Petroleum LLC, and KGH Operating.

The Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale's 2019-2020 season is proudly sponsored by The Oakland Companies. The 2019-2020 Host Hotel is The Northern Hotel, and the media sponsor is KTVQ-2.

Tickets for Celtic Christmas are available online at billingsymphony.org, by phone at 406-252-3610, or in person at 2721 2nd Ave. N. Ste. 350 in downtown Billings. On the day of the performances, tickets are only available online, or in person at the Lincoln Center auditorium located on N. 29th St. across from the Dude Rancher Lodge, beginning at 10:00 am.

The Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale (BSO&C) is the largest professional orchestra in Montana. Established in 1951, the BSO&C strives to enrich lives through music. Consisting of over 135 musicians, the BSO&C serves a regional population of 400,000 people located throughout South Central and Eastern Montana, and Northeastern Wyoming by introducing music to children, youth, adults, and seniors through Explore Music! the BSO&C's community engagement program. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

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