Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy A Celtic Family Christmas

Wednesday, December 13, 2017 7:30 pm



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NATALIE MACMASTER AND DONNELL LEAHY

DDFCFWT

A Celtic Family Christmas

THE BAND:

MAC MORIN (PIANO)

MARK KELSO (DRUMS)

ELMER FERRER (GUITAR)

RÉMI ARSENAULT (BASS/GUITAR)

PROGRAM
TO BE ANNOUNCED
FROM THE STAGE



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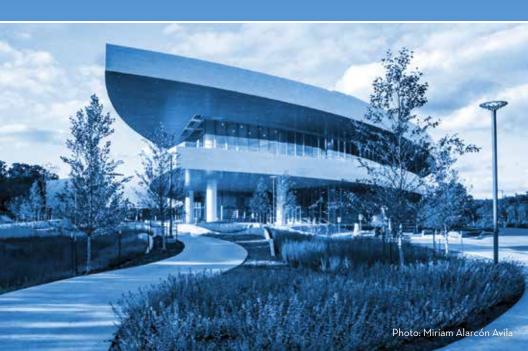
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To fans of fiddle music, **NATALIE MACMASTER** needs no introduction. Over a recording career now spanning 25 years, this Order of Canada recipient has released 11 albums that have notched sales of over 200,000 copies. She has won two JUNO and eleven East Coast Music Awards and been nominated for a Grammy, and has collaborated with artists as diverse as Yo-Yo Ma (on the Grammy-winning album Songs of Joy & Peace), Alison Krauss, Jesse Cook, and Béla Fleck. Though acknowledging that she can be "a musical chameleon," Natalie stresses that, above all else, "I play Cape Breton fiddle."

DONNELL LEAHY is no stranger to the awards podium himself. He is the oldest brother of the internationally acclaimed family musical group Leahy, winners of three JUNO Awards. Widely recognized as one of the best Celtic fiddlers in the world, his high-energy playing style also makes him a highly popular performer.

The fiddling duo have toured extensively over the years both together and separately, selling out venues across the continent. Each show is an unforgettable experience for all those in attendance, and word of their musical feats has travelled. The last Christmas concert series sold out in a matter of days, leading to additional shows added due to high demand. "If you really love fiddle music, there are performances here that are nothing short of jaw dropping ... performances that will raise you up and performances that will leave you misty-eyed," *The Guardian*.

This year, A Celtic Family Christmas exceeds all expectations with riveting performances by Natalie, Donnell, and their children, bringing the Cape Breton Christmas to you. Through a mix of both song and dance, they will take you on a journey of virtuoso performances, telling the story of the night before Christmas in the Leahy/MacMaster household. "Christmas is where this whole concept started and we are excited to be travelling as a family," says Donnell. "It's a perfect time to travel across Canada and bring light and happiness to families and fans across the country." With a lineup of familiar Christmas songs intermingled with classic Celtic songs sure to warm your heart, A Celtic Family Christmas brings you in the door, and welcomes you in as part of the family.

THE BAND:

MAC MORIN (piano), a founding member of the band, Beolach, has continued to perform his innovative Cape Breton piano style, touring and recording full time with Natalie MacMaster for nearly the last two decades. He has also appeared live and recorded with the likes of The Rankin Family, Yo-Yo Ma, Buddy MacMaster, and the Chieftains and has recorded on many of the



traditional projects produced in Cape Breton in the last 20 years. He also continues to travel as a guest with the Scottish group, Dannsa. As a well-known and respected dancer at home and abroad, Mac has travelled internationally to teach the traditional Cape Breton style. Such workshops and private events have taken him to private and group lessons at festivals, Féisan, and universities across Canada and the U.S. and throughout the U.K., Europe, and New Zealand.

MARK KELSO (drummer) originally hails from Belfast, Northern Ireland, but has made Toronto, Canada his home. Not only is he a skilled musician who plays drums and percussion, but is also a singer, producer, composer, and band leader. Mark has been the head of the percussion department at Humber College in Toronto since 2005. Mark's ability to play a wide variety of music styles has led him to become one of Canada's most sought-after drummers, and he has worked with a wide array of artists such as Pat Metheny, Michael Bublé, David Foster, Herbie Handcock, Olivia Newton-John, Bonnie Raitt, James Taylor, and many others. Mark's own JUNO-nominated band, the Jazz Exiles, has just released its second record.

ELMER FERRER (guitar), Cuban-Canadian guitarist, is widely recognized as one of the world's premier guitarists. Born to a musical family in 1973, in Santi Spiritus—a small city that holds one of the strongest histories in Cuban traditional music-Elmer started to play and study classical guitar at age 12 while devoting every free minute to self-study of the electric instrument. An extremely versatile and prolific session musician, Elmer has recorded and toured the globe with many of Cuba's top producers and artists. As a producer, arranger, session acoustic, or electric guitarist, Ferrer has contributed to more than 100 music recordings, including two Latin Grammy nominee albums. He has a prominent career as a composer and solo performer and is the leader of the remarkable Elmer Ferrer Band, known for captivating audiences and critics alike with their signature "advanced mix of Cuban Jazz and electric blues." Ferrer's touring includes performances at international music festivals worldwide. Six-time Grammy winner, pianist Chucho Valdés, on the occasion of having Elmer as a special guest of the Chucho Valdés quarter, introduced Elmer as "one of the greatest guitarists I have listened to in the last 30 years".

RÉMI ARSENAULT (bass/guitar) has been a prominent side and session musician in the PEI music scene for over 20 years. He picked up bass, drums, and guitar before he was 10 years old, growing up in a very musical family that is well-known for its cultural contributions to the French-Acadian music scene on the Island and beyond. He has toured North America and Europe numerous times with artists such as, Vishten, Catherine MacLellan, Còig, Fayo, Dominique Dupuis, Gadelle, An Acoustic Sin, and many more.



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RICHARD H. STANLEY

1932-2017



The entire Hancher family mourns the loss of our friend Richard Stanley.

A gifted engineer and businessman and a generous philanthropist, Dick approached life with the perfect mix of humor, intelligence, warmth, compassion, and trust. A dedicated supporter of our work, he was always especially excited about major endeavors that set Hancher apart—and he loved projects that touched the lives of those who most need hope and beauty in their lives.

We will particularly remember the gleam in his eyes as he watched Weed Park in Muscatine fill with members of his community to enjoy the Joffrey Ballet's performance on a beautiful summer night in 2007. That ambitious tour—which saw the Joffrey perform five free outdoor concerts across the state for thousands upon thousands of lowans—would not have been possible without support from Dick and Mary Jo Stanley.

So tonight, and each time you return to Hancher Auditorium, raise a glass to Dick in our beautiful Stanley Café. We're pleased that space will always serve as a reminder of his love for Hancher—and our love for him.

Our thoughts and love are with Mary Jo and the Stanley family.



"Dick was a wonderful friend and mentor to me. It was always a joy to share new ideas with him, especially when we could bring the transformative power of the arts to new audiences and communities. I miss him dearly."

-Chuck Swanson, executive director

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Black Box Theater, Iowa Memorial Union

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Eric Adjetey Anang (Ghanaian, 1985-) Mami Wata Coffin Northern white pine, acrylic paint, satin fabric, and magnets 74 x 29 x 43 in. UIMA School Programs Collections, AAS.56 Photo by Steve Erickson



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One of Hancher's 197 student employees

Basic information:

Emily Haywood. Junior from Union, Iowa. Theatre Arts major.

What is your position at Hancher?

Production Assistant. Usually I'm helping out, focusing lights, sometimes running the light board for shows.

How long have you worked at Hancher?

About a year and a half.

What is your favorite part about Hancher?

The amazing people I get to work with almost everyday!

Do you have any favorite Hancher show you've worked or attended?

I loved working the Hancher Opening with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and Trombone Shorty. Still, it is very hard to choose just one.

Do you have a favorite spot in Iowa City?

I love finding all of the quiet little nooks around lowa City, like the garden behind Halsey Hall.

Do you have any favorite TV shows, movies, bands, or books?

I love watching CW's *The 100* and ABC's *Quantico*. My favorite movie is *Wonder Woman*, but I am mostly a Marvel fan.

Do you have any favorite classes you've taken at the University of Iowa?

My very first semester at lowa I took Intro to Political Thought and Action. We read all seven Harry Potter books that semester and related them to political theory. It was the most interesting way to learn about a subject, and I still think about it to this day.

What are your eventual career goals? How does working at Hancher help you achieve those goals?

I love learning, so I often find myself trying to be a Jack-of-All-Trades, especially when it comes to theatre. Hancher has given me an in-depth look at what happens behind the scenes and a chance to be a part of something big. In the future, I hope to continue working backstage for places like Hancher, with the ability to design shows.

The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis

45TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

Hancher Auditorium, September 22, 2017













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Hancher Prelude members met with Leslie Odom Jr. following his performance on October 1, 2017. (Reception photos: Miriam Alarcón Avila, performance photos: Tim Schoon)

HANCHER PRELUDE

A social group dedicated to fostering the next generation of Hancher supporters

Hancher.

When I first came to lowa City, we called it Hancher Auditorium – the state's top arts presenter, in its iconic home on the lowa River. The place meant so much to me. It was the top of the top.

That was pre-flood.

Post-flood, it came to mean even more. Like Pollock's *Mural* on tour from the University of Iowa Museum of Art, Hancher's influence crept across the landscape, bringing a new understanding of just how deeply important the organization — not just the building — was to me, and to the city and state that I love.

THE FUTURE OF THE ARTS HAS NEVER BEEN MORE IN THE HANDS OF THE PEOPLE.

Hancher's educational outreach and commissioned works were guiding lights throughout the flood years. Today, there is again a building (and, well, that's okay, too, isn't it?) but in my mind it will never be Hancher Auditorium again. Hancher, the organization, means so much more.

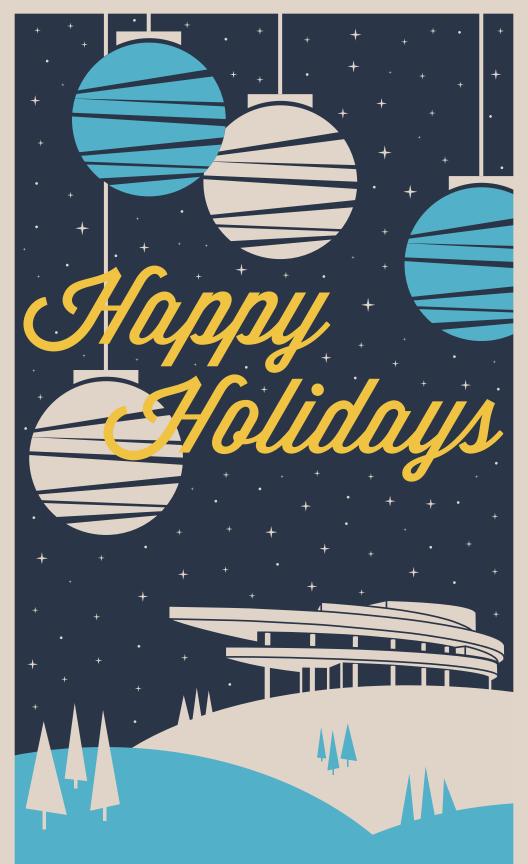
But disaster still looms. There can be a tornado – there always can be. And there can be a statehouse that would literally sell the Pollock in order to keep giving handouts to big corporations. There always can be.

That's why I jumped at the chance to join Hancher Prelude, a new donor circle for those that are new to the community, new to Hancher, or new to philanthropy. Prelude members get special invitations to meet Hancher artists, and, most importantly, meet each other. We get to know Hancher's leadership, learn from legacy contributors, and we get to be a part of the conversation. We get to be a part of not just keeping this iconic institution strong, but pushing it forward.

I believe that throughout human history the arts have always powered the future. And I believe the future of the arts has never been more in the hands of the people. That's why I'm asking you to please join me at the next Hancher Prelude event. We will party, we will strategize, and we will mobilize.

In Solidarity,

Matthew Steele Publisher, *Little Village*



THE HANCHER FAMILY WISHES YOUR FAMILY Happy Holidays.





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Here is a look back at Hancher's events so far this season exploring and celebrating Islamic art and Muslim artists.

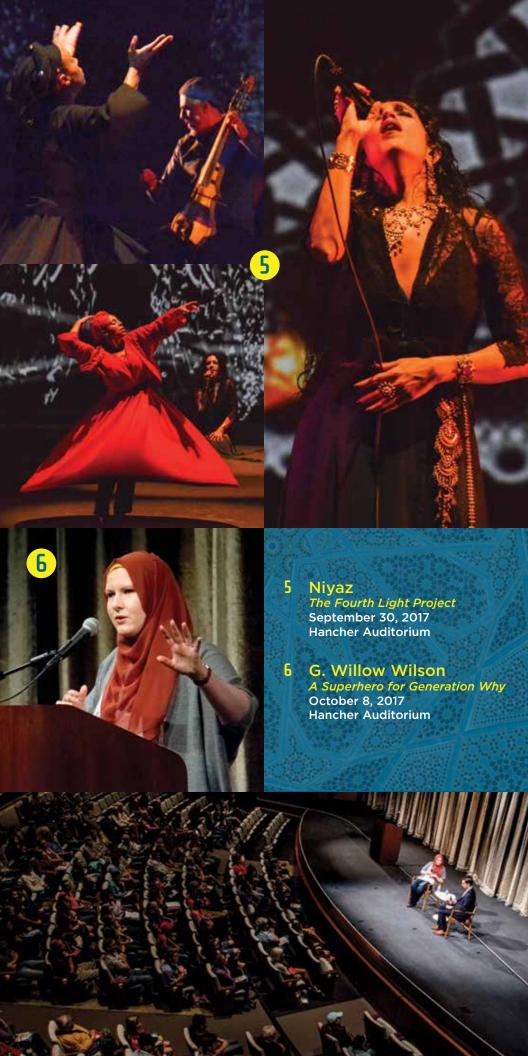
Photos: Miriam Alarcón Avila







- 1 KJ Sanchez September 7, 2017 Strauss Hall
- 2 Eid al-Adha Dinner UI Muslim Student Association September 9, 2017 Stanley Café
- 3 Niyaz dance workshop September 29, 2017 Mann Elementary School
- 4 Lunch with Niyaz
 Technology in Music
 September 29, 2017
 Iowa Memorial Union





The Hancher Showcase offers unique items perfect for gifts—or for yourself! All proceeds support Hancher's educational programs.



Before Performances

The Showcase is open one hour prior to performances and remains open during and after most performances in Hancher Auditorium.

Browse upcoming events at hancher.uiowa.edu/upcoming-events.

- Wednesdays 10:00 am-1:00 pm (not open on 12/27, 1/3, and 1/10)
- Thursdays 10:00 am-1:00 pm, 5:00-7:30 pm (open 10:00 am-1:00 pm only on 12/21; not open on 12/28, 1/4, and 1/11)

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