



Workshop Descriptions

Benjamin Hunter - Blues & Folk Fiddle/Mandolin, Swing & Jazz Violin/Mandolin, Bones

Joe Seamons - Clawhammer Banjo, Fingerpicking Guitar, Piedmont Guitar

School Presentation Summary

The thrill of dance music, the power of a cappella singing, and the joy of obscure or novelty songs are all touchstones of our educational workshops. Each student's heritage connects them to America's living traditions, so we include songs and activities that highlight this fact: young people get involved by either clapping, singing, or stomping along with us. With input from the school or community we serve, our programs can focus on a wide range of American stories: fiddle & banjo music of the 1800s, African American work songs, Woody Guthrie's life and music, Appalachian ballads, or the folk music of the Pacific Northwest are just a few of the programs we offer.

Educational Workshops Rhythm & Hamboning

Your voice isn't the only instrument you take with you everywhere. It's important to remember that you can play a lot of wonderful rhythm through just claps, stomps and thigh slapping. Folks will learn new songs as we explore the fundamentals of rhythmic accompaniment through the use of body percussion. Time permitting, we'll teach folks how to rattle the bones! We have delivered variants of this workshop to high schoolers in Aberdeen, Washington and to folks of all ages at the Old Town School of Folk Music in Chicago, IL.

Outcomes & Themes: Students strengthen their abilities to identify and physically express concepts including "downbeat," "off beat," "pulse" and "polyrhythm." Through participatory activities, students have the way paved for rhythmic improvisation, creating inroads towards improv with instruments. Students celebrate the spontaneous nature of many forms of American music.

Fiddle & Banjo

This workshop leads participants through an exploration of two instruments at the core of American string band tradition. After we trace the history of fiddle and banjo through American dance music of the 1800s, participants will listen to live interpretations and recorded examples of African American duos such as Nathan Frazier & Frank Patterson. The evolution of this instrumental pairing is then discussed in terms of our approach to interpreting fiddle and banjo music for audiences today. Intermediate and advanced students are welcome to bring their instruments for a jam session that will conclude the workshop!

Outcomes & Themes: Students learn terms such as "downbeat," "offbeat" and "fills" through observing the role of both the fiddle and banjo in jazz, old time, and bluegrass music. Students gain an appreciation for the diverse sounds that are possible on each instrument through bowing techniques for the fiddle and right hand styles of playing the banjo.

Northwest Folk Songs

Discover the connections between Woody Guthrie's Northwest compositions, such as "Pastures of Plenty" and "Grand Coulee Dam," with local logging, fishing and sawmill ballads composed by working people of the Pacific Northwest. Through singing and discussing these tunes together—and sharing the stories about how and where they were composed—we will reflect upon the ways and which folk songs are tied to specific places. This class is adaptable to all skill levels and acoustic instruments!

Ben & Joe have taught this workshop in multiple settings. For instance, in Spring of 2015 they shared it with middle schoolers at Open Window School in Bellingham, WA with a special focus on the connection between the Works Progress Administration and Woody Guthrie's songwriting for the Bonneville Power Administration. In 2014, the Grays Harbor Community Foundation provided grant funding for this program to be delivered in public workshops that were free to people of all ages in the Grays Harbor region.

Outcomes & Themes: Students learn about the history of industry in the Pacific Northwest while learning to sing or play the traditional songs that document that history. Emphasis can be shifted to either the industrial or the environmental aspects of this tradition. Older students are encouraged to reflect upon the role of the harvester as a protector of his or her resources.

For schools where logging, fishing, or sawmills provide jobs, students learn to connect their own communities' stories with the thriving tradition of Northwest folk songs.

Creole & Cajun Music

Explore homegrown music of Southern Louisiana through learning the songs and dances of masters such as Sam McGee and Dewey Balfa. The Creole and Cajun traditions stem from a clash of cultures: the Acadian migration to the American South, and the melting pot of culture created by a Caribbean Slave migration, as well as other European influences already found in Louisiana's long and rich cultural history. Students are taught basic pronunciation of Creole French so they can sing along with one of the iconic recordings of accordionist Amede Ardoin. Then, everyone gets on their feet and learns the basics of the waltz and the two step!

Outcomes & Themes: Students are introduced to the history of Acadian and Creole culture, and connected with the thriving musical traditions of Southern Louisiana. Students gain familiarity with the Creole style of French spoken outside of New Orleans, while deepening their knowledge of geography through the use of maps (see above). Lastly, clapping, stomping and dancing activities build musical skills while getting students up and moving!

Interactive Workshop - Along with our standard focus on traditional American music and it's history, these programs focus on group activities that teach students how to play 1-2 songs, their places of origin, relevance and influence. If more than 90 minutes are available, the extra time is dedicated to supplementary exercises including body percussion, dance, and singing.

Residency Programs: 3 & 5 Day - Residency programs allow us to work more closely with students, diving deeper into the stories that surround the songs, exploring musical theory and the evolution of songs as they travel through the country. After listening to and discussing live music and historic recordings, students explore our American musical heritage through singing, dancing, maps, and hambone rhythm play.

All programs are adaptable. We work with you to focus our curriculum on the region and elements of American musical tradition you wish your students to explore. The genres explored may include, but are not limited to—folk, blues, ragtime, jazz, jug & stringband, northwest logging ballads, a cappella, and prison/work songs.

1-Day: 90min - \$400, 120min - \$600

3-Days: \$1200 - \$1800

5-Days: \$1800 - \$2800

**these costs reflect 1 class per day.

Contact and additional information:

Benjamin Hunter & Joe Seamons

For more information on our music and our work in the community, please visit our websites.

www.benjoemusic.com

www.communityartscreate.org

For more details on the programs & workshops please contact us directly at benandjoeband@gmail.com

For booking, please contact rob@quicksilverproductions.com or martha@quicksilverproductions.com