

HARPER WORKSHOPS

HARPER CONCERT:

"Imagine a singer with the deep soul of Motown, a harmonica player who can graft Sonny Boy 11 and Little Walter with Sugar Blue, a song writer who tells his own compelling stories in an unhurried, J.J. Cale-like manner, and a musical visionary who is unafraid to mix the didgeridoo, an important part of the Australian Indigenous culture, with infectious modern percussive rhythms, and you have a glimpse of what Harper is about". Art Tipaldi, Hartford Advocate, CT.

Harper will perform songs from his new CD "Stand Together" (Blind Pig Records) which is due for release on May 18, 2010.. Harper will explain the story behind each song with deep personal insight and the quick comedic wit - he is known for. "Stand Together" is a continuing journey of self-discovery and the appreciation for the strong bond he has formed with the first Australians. This journey began with a chance meeting with a Hopi native in Colorado, USA. Harper felt a karmic connection with the flute player "Dan Running Bear", who gave Harper a small glimpse of his life and the way his tribe lived with the land. This meeting made Harper realise how little he knew about the indigenous people of his own country of Australia and the similarities between the two cultures. So, he set himself a new course which brought these wonderful and generous people into his life. Part of this journey was learning to play the didgeridoo as well as learning about the indigenous culture, which spiritually connects us to the land. Harper's songs are also reflections of his own life on the road and the people he has had the opportunity to meet around the world. Harper will perform in acoustic and electric format. Harper's band "Midwest Kind" will feature Drew Pentkowski on acoustic/ electric guitar/ national steel guitar, Chris Smith on bass guitar and Marc Dixon on Drums/timbales/Zydeco tie.

WORKSHOPS:

"THE SECRETS OF THE BLUES HARMONICA"

World, renowned harmonica performer "Harper" will reveal the various secrets of the trade. He will demonstrate and discuss, note bending, tonguing, vamping, soloing, phrasing and breathing techniques. He will demonstrate acoustic and electric harmonica styles and the use of amplifiers to produce tone. All will be revealed!!!! Harper encourages audience participation so bring along a diatonic harp in the key of C major and be prepared to jam!!!! This workshop is designed for beginners to the very advanced. Everyone who attends this workshop will walk away with a new insight, a new attitude and a renewed love of the harp.

For the "Blues in the Schools" Program, Harper will discuss the history of the harmonica from its early beginnings in China and its journey to Germany then to the USA. Harper will demonstrate its use in blues music from its acoustic origins to the electric harmonica. Students will see the harmonica demonstrated in acoustic and electric format through traditional blues tunes via Harper and his talented band. Audience participation is encouraged for a fun day with the blues. This workshop is 50-60 minutes duration. Harper is also endorsed by Hohner Harmonicas who will contribute to all Harper's harmonica workshops.

"INTRODUCTION TO THE DIDGERIDOO (YIDAKI)"

Harper will provide a general introduction to the Australian indigenous instrument of the didgeridoo (yidaki) and its place in Aboriginal history. Harper will talk about how Aborigines make a didgeridoo and its use in Aboriginal dance/ art/ music and culture. He will talk about the spiritual and healing qualities of the instrument and its use in Aboriginal religious ceremonies. He will also talk about the different types of woods and keys available. He will demonstrate some breathing techniques to develop circular breathing. He will also demonstrate various calls and rhythms through song. Harper will demonstrate the animal and bird calls of the Dingo/ Kookaburra/ Kangaroo and the Emu. During the presentation color pictures of Aboriginal art and Australian animals will be displayed as well as a large map of Australia. He will also discuss the best way to get started on the didgeridoo. The presentation will also feature Harper's amazing band "Midwest Kind". This workshop is designed for beginners through to advanced performers or for people who just want to listen to the haunting woody tones of this incredible instrument made by nature. This workshop is 50-60 minutes duration.

Harper's workshops promote cultural diversity and history through audience participation. Harper has conducted his workshops and residencies around the world. In the USA, he has been involved in "The Blues in The Schools" program and various outreach programs for elementary children through to college level.

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"INTRODUCTION TO THE DIDGERIDOO & DIDGERIDOO CRAFTING/ DANCE/ ART"

This is a general introduction to the didgeridoo as described above. "Didgeridoo Crafting" encourages workshop participants to create their own didgeridoos by the use of a pvc pipe (usually four feet in length). Harper & his band will help each student to gain the basics of droning & circular breathing & calling. Each student will also paint their didgeridoos, design a mouth piece using bee's wax and participate in a performance with Harper & his band. Students will also learn to paint/ draw in the style of the Australian Aborigines. There will also be an Aboriginal dance component where students will learn the Emu / Kangaroo/ Kookaburra and Dingo dance. The class will be divided into three sections: Aboriginal Art/ Didgeridoo Crafting and Aboriginal Dance. This workshop requires 2 to 3 contact hours. This workshop is a "hands on" approach to Australian Aboriginal art, music and culture. This workshop, can also be tailored to suit existing school curriculum.

THEMED PERFORMANCES:

"HARP ATTACK"

Harper will lead a group of leading harmonica performers who are also performing at the festival. Each harp player will perform two songs each in a round with an all out jam at the end of the show. Harper will also ask each player a series of questions, which are aimed to help audience members to improve their harmonica playing skills.

"SOMETHING BLUES"

A themed concert with various roots/blues performers who perform in a round and together on a range of blues related material. This themed concert works very well in a festival format, where a number of headliners can be brought together in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

Detailed lesson plans can be provided for each workshop/ presentation.

REFERENCES- Harmonica/ didgeridoo workshops/ residencies/ presentations

Buckingham Center for Exceptional Students, Fort Myers, Florida (handicapped children, elementary, middle, high School)

Westgate School, Pensacola, Florida (handicapped children, elementary, middle, high school)

"Blues in The Schools" program- Fort Smith River Blues Society, Arkansas

Corse Elementary School, Burlington, Iowa

Grines Elementary School, Burlington, Iowa

Boyd Elementary School, Springfield, Missouri

Stanley Switlik Elementary School, Marathon, Florida

Carter Middle School, Clio, Michigan

Naples Elementary School, Naples, New York

Black Mountain Primary School, Black Mountain, North Carolina. The LEAF Festival Out reach Program

Russell Hall Primary School, West End, Queensbury, Bradford, West Yorkshire, England.

Bradford Primary School, Bradford, West Yorkshire, England.

FESTIVALS- Harmonica/ didgeridoo workshops

Shakori Hills Grassroots Festival, Pittsboro, North Carolina

Ottawa Blues Festival, Ottawa Canada

Mount Tremblant Blues Festival, Quebec, Canada

Blissfest, Michigan

The Chicago Blues Festival, Chicago, Illinois

Riverhawk Music Festival, Brooksville, Florida

Taste of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

Riverhead Blues Festival, Riverhead, New York

Maldon Folk festival, Victoria, Australia

The Sydney Harmonica Festival, Sydney , Australia

Port Fairy Folk Festival, Victoria, Australia. Plus many more

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