

Redwood Dulcimer Day 2021 Class Descriptions

Session 1: 9:45am–11:00am PDT

Easy Playing Foundations to Build With (Lois Hornbostel, Beginner and Up)

What fingers to use in playing on the dulcimer's fretboard, ways to make your melody notes clear, counting rhythm, right-hand techniques for smooth strumming, and a taste of fingerpicking too!

Mountain Dulcimer Master Class (Ehukai Teves, All Levels)

Come and get help on your playing from a longtime professional multi-instrumentalist. Bring your questions on playing techniques, creative ideas, phrasing, music theory, or your musical equipment. If you want to iron out difficult parts in a tune you're learning, bring it in and Ehukai will be happy to help you.

Be the King or Queen of the Campfire (Janet Herman, Intermediate)

Kick your campfire cred up a notch or two with classic catchy-chorus hits everyone will join in on like: "Wagon Wheel," "Danny's Song," "Heart of Gold," "Closer to Fine," "Hallelujah," and more (exact repertoire TBD close to event date). We'll look at chords, strumming, breaks, and harmony vocals to really bring these songs to life. If you have a request for a particular song for this workshop, please send Janet an email (fasola@cruzio.com) by July 31 and she will consider it!

Dulcimediation Workshop (Kevin Roth, All Levels)

Dulcimer musician and artist Kevin Roth has developed a playing technique and philosophy called dulcimediation (tm) which has become recognized in the dulcimer community. He has taught this to his students to help bring a sense of inner-peace and clarity into their lives with positive results.

Modes on the Hammered Dulcimer (Steve Eulberg, Beginner)

Once I discovered that there were (2) TWO basic patterns for playing the classical Greek modes on the hammered dulcimer, I was able to uncover a great many tunes that were just hiding in my instrument, waiting for me to find them! (Note: knowledge of music theory is NOT required for this class, but previous experience at listening and singing or humming songs and tunes is a must.) Students will come away with a firm foundation of how songs work and how they work on the dulcimer. PDF Handouts provided.

Session 2: 11:15am–12:30am PDT

Mountain "Roots" Music (Lois Hornbostel, Intermediate and Up)

Learn at least three simple and fun pieces of music from the early days of the mountain dulcimer's Southern Appalachian Mountains history - a play party song, a ballad, and an old-time string band dance tune.

Playing the Blues and Improvising on the Mt. Dulcimer (Ehukai Teves, Advanced Beginner)

Why do they call it the Blues and why is it so much fun? Find out why people play the blues, how they play it and how you can enjoy it too. 12 bar blues chart and the patterns to play over them to squeeze the most blues out of it.

Easy Holiday Tunes on the Middle String (Deborah Hamouris, Advanced Beginner)

“Good King Wenceslas” and “The Cherry Tree Carol” both lie beautifully on the middle string of the standard dulcimer, tuned DAD. Each of these arrangements also has a harmony to add at will. Simple enough to learn by the holidays! DAD tuning.

Hammered Dulcimer: Removing the Expensive Notes (Steve Eulberg, Advancing Beginner to Intermediate)

Using a familiar tune (The Ash Grove), we will explore the whole instrument with melodic and harmonic arranging ideas like I've done with Tweaking Twinkles (in Dulcimer Players News).

Getting Started on The Hammered Dulcimer (Peter Tommerup, Beginner)

First steps for getting started playing include: exploring the "feel" and dynamics of your hammers, along with understanding the layout of the easiest and most frequently used notes and scales on your instrument. Next, we'll work on some ergonomic patterns for playing these notes and scales, including how to effortlessly play across the bridges. These elements of dulcimer playing are important "foundation knowledge" that will help you gain confidence and enjoy making music. Finally, we'll work on a few easy folk songs to help you develop a fun repertoire to practice and play.

Session 3: 2:00pm–3:15pm PDT

Fiddle Tunes that Sound Good Slow (Dusty Thorburn, Intermediate)

Slow jams are a traditional way of learning songs in Irish and bluegrass circles, but in this workshop we will not only play slowly; we will concentrate on fiddle tunes that sound great at slow speeds. Learning fiddle tunes obviously builds up your repertoire but is also a really fun way to develop both right- and left-hand techniques. Tunes examined may include: "Strawberry Blossom," "Liberty," "Reel of Tolluchgorum," and more.

English Ballads and Songs (Neal Hellman, Intermediate)

In most of the arrangements both the melody and the chordal technique will be illustrated. Selections include ballads such as “The Blacksmith,” “Rosemary Lane,” “The Death of Queen Jane,” and the humorous “Jolly Rogues of Lynn” as well as the beautiful love song “I Live not Where I Love.” Some of the selections have a moderate number of embellishments, but you do not have to be proficient in them to enjoy this class. Capo required.

Celtic Wind (Jessica Comeau, Intermediate to Advanced)

The end of summer is nigh, so let us welcome the autumn with an elemental Celtic celebration of fall breezes! Among the songs we will be learning are “The Wind That Shakes the Barley,” “Now Westlin Winds,” and “South Wind (An Ghaoth Aneas).” Our home tuning will be C-G-C (only one full step lower than D-A-D tuning and compatible with D-A-D tablature).

Mediterranean Musical Holiday (Peter Tommerup, Intermediate) Love playing fiddle tunes, but up for trying something fresh & different? These engaging, lively, and fun to play instrumental tunes come from the folk music traditions of France, Brittany, and Spain. Like Celtic and American "fiddle tunes," they provide the animating rhythms and melodies that energize and inspire folk dancers in these cultures. We'll most likely explore a waltz, bourree, and polka from France, an andro from Brittany, and a mazurka from Galicia in Spain (an ancient Celtic enclave).

Playing Songs with Chords (Laura Devine-Burnett, Advanced Beginner)

I have three of my favorite songs to teach you, playing with chords. It is wonderful to learn how to read dulcimer tablature, but if you are jamming with others and they hand out chord sheets, you can join in with these five simple chords. (D-A-E-G-C) I will show you some fun techniques as well, hammer on, pull off, slide, and slap strum. The songs we will play and sing are "Canaan's Land" (Traditional,) "Three Little Birds"(Bob Marley,) and "Children of Darkness" (Richard Fariña.)

Session 4: 3:30pm–4:45pm

Cajun and Zydeco Good Time Music (Lois Hornbostel, Advanced)

Louisiana Cajun dance music has easy melodies, simple chord progressions, and exciting rhythms - which make it great fun to play on the mountain dulcimer! Lois will teach you to play a Cajun waltz and a two-step with authenticity. Then we'll explore Creole "Zydeco" style music, how it differs from Cajun music, and how to play it.

Easy Mountain Dulcimer Chords for Any Key (Ehukai Teves, All Levels) Learn the easy method for playing chords on the mountain dulcimer to accompany your singing, play along with other instruments in different keys, and the theoretical knowledge to understand why. Play songs in different keys as well as understand the relationship of chords and melodies without looking, re-tuning or using a capo.

Three Tunes Walk into a Bar: A Celtic Exploration (Steve Eulberg, Intermediate)

Using different tune-types from Celtic Repertoire (a reel, a jig and a hornpipe), we'll explore their commonalities, distinctions, and some confusions, in order to develop and hone a skillset that can acquire and play these tunes in a shorter time. We'll touch on typical ornamentation as well.

Mystical Fire: Medieval "Cantigas de Santa Maria" for Mountain Dulcimer (Jessica Comeau, Intermediate – Advanced)

Medieval music and the mountain dulcimer are a match made in heaven! "Mystical Fire" will feature selections from the Cantigas de Santa Maria from 13th Century Spain. The timeless, exotic melodies of the Cantigas range from the reverential and meditative to the lively and sensational.

Introduction to the Mountain Dulcimer (Ron Beardslee, Beginner)

If you are new to the dulcimer then this is the workshop is for you. This workshop is designed to familiarize students having minimal or no musical experience with the mountain dulcimer. We will cover how to strum with the right hand, play simple chords and melodies with the left hand, how to read Tablature (the notation system that dulcimer players use), and how to tune a dulcimer. At the end of the workshop everyone should be able to play one or two simple songs on the dulcimer and will be able to use what they have learned to develop the skills required for more complex pieces.