

Calvin Cairns

Joyful Fiddler

Calvin Cairns is a Canadian fiddler and musical entertainer. He has toured extensively, as a solo musician and with various bands and theatre companies, in Russia, Europe, Japan, Australia, the United Kingdom, the USA, and from coast to coast to coast across Canada.

A graduate of Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton, where he studied violin technique, arranging and composition, he has also received intensive private training on violin with teachers in Canada and England. A multi-instrumentalist, he plays the Fiddle, Concertina, Musical Saw, Accordion and Piano.

Calvin is perhaps best known for his wildly popular band, **The Romaniacs**. Along with partner Steve Bengtson, he combined his Ukrainian background with other eastern European folk, gypsy jazz and pop influences to create a unique style of ethno-fusion. This non-stop tongue in cheek polka party performed at every major folk music festival in Canada. Other highlights included the **Montreal Jazz Festival** and the **Just For Laughs Comedy Festival**. The Romaniacs appeared with the Halifax and Thunder Bay Symphonies, recorded two albums (a third compilation was released to critical acclaim in Japan) and toured Australia.

He fiddled his way from Moose Jaw to Moscow with the Canadian folk music institution **Stringband**, a completely Canadian band with an internationally crisscrossing concert tour schedule including performances in Moscow, The Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Moldavia, Estonia, Latvia, Belarus, Boston and Baker Lake.

Calvin has also performed and recorded with **Stuart MacLean** and **The Vinyl Café**, **The Bills**, Connie Kaldor, Humphrey and the Dumptrucks, Don Freed, Ferron, **Spirit of the West**, **Bob Bossin**, and had the thrill of performing with folk legend **Pete Seeger**.

Calvin's career in theatrical music began with The **Caravan Stage Company**, touring in horse drawn wagons across North America in the late 1970's and early 1980's. He has since written, performed and directed for numerous companies including **Welfare State International** (England), **Public Dreams** (Vancouver), and the Caravan Farm Theatre (BC).

In 1993 Calvin teamed up with comic genius Gina Bastone. They created The Suzy & Uncle Joe Family Show, a classic comedy team that left a trail of "I can't believe they did that!" everywhere they played.

Calvin has composed, arranged and performed music for film, television and radio, including: The Peridichucks (CBC,TV); Max Glick (CBC,TV) and numerous radio and television appearances with the Romaniacs.

Since 1996 Calvin has lived in Victoria B.C. where he taught at the **Victoria Conservatory** from 1997-2007 where he has established the Conservatory Fiddlers Orchestra, an ensemble of over fifty fiddlers aged six to eighty-six.

Calvin helped develop a fiddle program serving remote First Nations communities in the **Northwest Territories** where he has taught with the Kole Crook Fiddle Association since 2004. In 2011 Calvin started a similar project with the **Tsilhqot'in** of northern British Columbia where he continues to teach through the **All Nations Arts Society**.

Between teaching tours to northern communities, Calvin performs in the Victoria area in a celtic duo with singer songwriter **Paul O'Brien**.