

## **Robin Kessinger and Kate Long: a magical combination.**

### **Traditional and contemporary Appalachian music and stories**

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Two of Appalachia's most compelling artists team up to deliver a high-energy, thought-and-laugh-filled evening, with lots of audience participation. With their mix of traditional tunes and Kate's award-winning songs and stories, they forge new links in the traditional chain.

As Pittsburgh public radio host Larry Berger said when they played their first concert together in Pittsburgh, "This is truly an inspired combination."

Kate and Robin have fun together, and people who come to their concerts get to laugh a lot between songs - also during songs such as "Lift Me to Heaven before I Turn Mean" or "Go Try and Dump It When Nobody Is Around." They may also shed a tear with ballads like Kate's "Who'll Watch the Homeplace (an IBMA Song of the Year)" - all paired with Robin's guitar wizardry.

"Expect to laugh, cry, think, and come away with a full heart," said Meryle Korn, who produced two of Kate's concerts for the Portland (OR) Folklore Society. "Whether Kate and Robin are playing traditional tunes or their own compositions, the feeling is down-to-earth, down-home, and deeply rooted."

Audiences love their down-to-earth, conversation between songs: These two seasoned artists make you look at life in ways you don't expect.

Robin Kessinger's guitar virtuosity has earned him the Winfield national flatpick guitar champion title and an international reputation for creative, sensitive rendition of traditional tunes. He is one of the folk world's most respected guitar masters and teachers. For a decade, he coordinated Guitar Week for the Augusta Heritage Center, and he teaches at Steve Kaufmann's guitar camp, the Swannanoa Gathering, and other camps.

He has been on the cover of *Flatpicking Guitar* magazine, has 6 CDs of his own and has played on about 2 dozen. He is best-known as a national flatpick guitar champion, but he is also the West Virginia state dulcimer champion and a fine mandolin player. He leads the shape-note singing in his church on Sundays.

He and his legendary musical family are the subject of a BBC documentary. His father, Bob Kessinger, quit traveling with an old-time band to become a minister. His great-uncle, legendary old-time fiddler Clark Kessinger, was the first old time musician to sell more than a million LPs.

Kate Long is a national award-winning songwriter whose voice Rambles Magazine described as “a rich, deep force.” She has performed at the International Storytelling Center, the Kennedy Center Millineum Stage, and a variety of camps and venues and has taught at Augusta, Swannanoa and other camps. She performs regularly for public interest and spiritual groups and has three CDs of her own songs.

She is also a national award-winning West Virginia public radio producer and newspaper reporter who tackles tough subjects like predatory mortgages and elder abuse. Her songs and reporting showcase her heart, humor, and down-to-earth ability to connect with people. She takes what she knows and crafts it into heart-stirring pieces like “McNamara’s Tear,” a Vietnam ballad sung in old-time Appalachian ballad style.

Their wide-ranging interests flavor their shows and CD. Robin is an avid bow-hunter, a lover of the woods. A member of the historical recreation group, Mountain Men, he presents workshops for adults and children on early American woodlore, sometimes with campsite, combining music with instruction.

Their visit to \_\_\_\_\_ is a great chance to see them as they tour to promote their new live performance CD, “What We Do.”

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