

Hub City Ramblers Bio

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Lookout! Here comes the Hub City Ramblers!

Immersed in the traditional bluegrass canon, the Hub City Ramblers bring their own thoroughly modern west coast sound to the table. Their repertoire typically consists of trad., old time songs and instrumentals, and their own uniquely crafted originals with some hints of jazz and rock n roll influences. Although each member is a Vancouver Island University Music alumni, Hub City Ramblers is made up of a truly unique band of individuals from diverse backgrounds coming together for the love of acoustic folk music.

Despite everyone's hectic schedules they have developed over the years through dedicated (almost) weekly rehearsing and jamming in Ira's studio at Generation Farms, an Equine Facilitated Wellness and horsemanship program run by Ira's wife Emily, and her mother Deborah - both experts in the field. It's a therapeutic place where humans and horses alike can go to heal, a rural location near the city limits, amongst the expansive fields and farm land where horses and wild animals roam, under the misty Mount Benson. What better place to make music?!

HCR's debut EP "Coming Back Home to You," was released in December 2014 already to critical acclaim. The EP-making process was a bit of a slow cooker, simmering at each stage to sonic perfection. Studio engineer, renaissance man, and friend Ed Lee created a relaxed and fun space at Broken Spiral Studios. Though life has a way of "taking over" over time we managed to come together, have fun, challenge each other to play our absolute best, make totally inappropriate jokes, go for pho, and repeat. With Ed at the helm (AND album design), Nick Hornbuckle's seriously BOSS banjo work on the first track, and Rick Salt (Lois Lane Studios) mastering we knew the EP would be in for a polished sound. Indeed, the finished product is something we are all very proud of. There was a collective high-five as all of the elements came together and this selection of songs actually made its way into CD format that we could put into the hands, stereos and iPods of our family, friends, peers and not to mention all of the lovely (and trusting) folks who purchased pre-sales. The love and support we've received along the way has been truly heart warming and inspiring.

The story of HCR starts with the core "brother duo" Ira Pelletier and Brad Shipley, both first call musicians in mid-Vancouver Island. When they first met many years ago in Jazz school, they spent hours discussing their love of mandolins, and sitting in the grass picking when they probably should have been in class. They decided to form the duo when Ira took interest in bluegrass guitar. Now with both guitar and

mandolin bases covered, it was a natural resolution.

Ira Pelletier has become a mainstay of the island bluegrass and folk festival scene. He is known as a mandolin player, but is equally adept at the guitar. Ira was the founder, mandolinist, and chief songwriter of the bluegrass/newgrass band Skagway. Ira has played numerous times at the Lighthouse, Coombs, Sooke and Chemainus bluegrass festivals, and at the Islands Folk Festival. He co-produced and recorded two CDs with Skagway, and one with guitarist Ed Lee while also playing mandolin on many recording sessions for other artists. He makes his home on an old dairy farm in Nanaimo with his wife and son.

Brad Shipley is known for his prowess as a jazz guitar player as well as his mandolin skills. Brad has toured extensively and played at music festivals throughout British Columbia, from Inuvik, in the N.W.T., the Yukon and many places in between. He has contributed his stylings to such groups as Fishead Stew, Space9, The Contraband Trio, The Salty Dawgs, The Big Bossa and many others. Brad has also been a part of musical theatre productions such as The Rocky Horror Picture Show, Godspell and Hedwig & the Angry Inch. Brad makes his home on Gabriola Island.

Behind his unassuming nature and quiet confidence, lies one restless and creative musical spirit, and you would struggle to find a style of music that hasn't already captured his imagination and has found a way to imprint itself into his unique approach to music. Drawing on everything from the classic American traditions of Jazz, Blues and Country music in addition to more contemporary styles, Duncan's approach to music is one that steeps in tradition as it aims to push towards new sounds whether he is playing the guitar, dobro and pedal steel or singing his own brand of Americana songs...

An in demand sideman, he has had the pleasure of playing alongside some of Canada's finest musicians including Ed Robertson of the Barenaked Ladies, Jim Cuddy of Blue Rodeo, Jimmy Rankin, Sue Medley and Canadian Jazz icon Brad Turner.

Though an island girl at heart, Marisha Devoin spent years floating around the world, literally and figuratively, as a musician on cruise ships, in musical theatre orchestras, and various touring projects. Her first foray into acoustic folk music was a couple chance opportunities to perform with Ira and the boys of Skagway, getting the hang of the new repertoire, on-the-spot song-learning and vocal harmonizing. It was a whole other world of music never really embarked upon until then. Ever since joining HCR she's been really able to dig into the vocalizing and has developed a real appreciation for the brute-yet-zen-like strength required to play upright bass for long spans of time, and sing those pretty, plaintive songs (let alone the boot stompin', barn burners). Lately, Marisha has dug in her roots so-to-speak, moving back to South Nanaimo, and is building and establishing a music education and production studio.

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