



PRESS RELEASE

First Performer Details Announced for the 2022 North Carolina Folk Festival

Eight performers announced including “Newgrass” legend Sam Bush

Greensboro, N.C., May 11, 2022 — The North Carolina Folk Festival announced today the first group of performers who will appear on its stages in downtown Greensboro September 9, 10, and 11, 2022.

“The broad range of musical styles on stage this year will be familiar to some and new to others, and always in celebration of the unique and creative ways these artists honor, share, and craft their cultural roots and traditions into their performances,” said Amy Grossmann, President and CEO of the North Carolina Folk Festival. “We hope this whets appetites for our annual return to the streets of Greensboro and for more exciting announcements from the Festival in the weeks to come!”

The eight artists announced today include:

- **Sam Bush** (*Bluegrass / Newgrass*) - Kentucky-born multi-instrumentalist, Sam Bush, is considered an originator of newgrass music, a progressive form of bluegrass that incorporates a variety of genres. Bush has been awarded several GRAMMY Awards and has been recognized for his lifetime achievements as an instrumentalist by the Americana Music Association and the International Bluegrass Music Association.
- **Karan Casey** (*Irish Music & Song*) - Singing songs charged with a sense of social responsibility in a career spanning over 25 years, Karan Casey draws inspiration from a wide range of sources from the personal to the historical and political, touching on themes of family, loss, love, the empowerment of women and Irish revolutionary struggle. Karan will be joined by Niamh Dunne on fiddle and vocals, and guitarist and accordionist Sean Óg Graham.
- **QWANQWA** (*Music of Ethiopia & East Africa*) - QWANQWA is a supergroup of musicians from Addis Ababa. Brought together by a shared passion for the power of Ethiopian music, this group shines an experimentalism based in the virtuosity of rooted traditions. They draw inspiration from East African regions in and around Ethiopia, delving deep into regional beats and moods that ranges from a trance-like song of the Eritrean tribe of Blen to a Somalian rock number to Mahmoud Ahmed sing-a-longs.
- **Michael Winograd & The Honorable Mentshn** (*Jewish Klezmer*) - Klezmer is the traditional celebratory music of the Eastern European Jewish diaspora. With roots that pre-date the Middle Ages, Klezmer incorporates cantorial melody, ancient folk tunes, Yiddish poetry, Hebraic ritual, and Greek and Ottoman influences. The all-star lineup of Michael Winograd & the Honorable Mentshn is leading a revival of Klezmer into the 21st century. The band—whose name plays on the plural form of the Yiddish approbation “mentsh,” meaning a person of integrity, is the brainchild of Brooklyn clarinet virtuoso and band leader, Michael Winograd.

- **Kaleta & Super Yamba Band** (*Afrobeat from West Africa*) - Kaleta & Super Yamba Band are fronted by Afrobeat and Juju veteran Leon Ligan-Majek a.k.a. Kaleta. The singer/guitarist from the West African country of Benin Republic lived his adolescent life in Lagos, Nigeria where Afrobeat was born. Now based in New York City, Kaleta has been leading Super Yamba Band since 2017. The group's sound draws on the members' shared reverence for the raw, psychedelic sounds that captivated Kaleta as a music loving kid in 1970s Benin. Kaleta is the only guitarist on earth to have backed both Fela Kuti & King Sunny Ade and with more than 40 years in afrobeat, he's a veteran of the genre.
- **Big Bang Boom** (*Family Pop / Rock*) - Big Bang Boom is a pop/rock music group from Greensboro, NC that writes and plays parent-friendly children's music with a pop sensibility. Led by North Carolina native Chuck Folds, they have toured the US playing performing arts centers, schools, libraries, and children's museums.
- **Jeff Little Trio** (*Blue Ridge Piano*) - Jeff Little is an award-winning musician from the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. With few exceptions the piano does not play a prominent part in Americana or Appalachian music and is rarely the lead instrument. But Jeff Little is an exception and has not only been recognized as a critically acclaimed musician but also a true music innovator. Jeff is an inductee to the Blue Ridge Music Hall of Fame and is Artist in Residence for the Popular Music Program at Catawba College in Salisbury, NC. Rounding out the trio with Jeff are Steve Lewis (guitar and banjo) and Luke Little (mandolin).
- **Symphony Unbound featuring Dori Freeman and the Winston-Salem Symphony String Quintet** (*Appalachian Music & Song w/ String Quintet*) - Steeped in the mountain music of Southwest Virginia, Dori Freeman is a multifaceted artist who defies and expands the notions of being a musician from that region - creating her own signature sound through songwriting and performing in a wide variety of musical styles. Dori will perform with the Winston-Salem Symphony String Quintet as part of their *Symphony Unbound* series, an initiative to bring music out of the concert hall and into the community, collaborating with musicians from other genres. This performance of *Symphony Unbound* with Dori Freeman is co-presented with the Blue Ridge Music Center.

To learn more about these artists and their stories, please visit ncfolkfestival.com/lineup.

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About the North Carolina Folk Festival: The North Carolina Folk Festival's mission is to honor, celebrate, and share the meaningful ways communities express their creativity and cultural traditions through music, dance, food, crafts and other folk arts to enhance appreciation of diverse traditions and contribute to community vibrancy and inclusivity. Our signature event, the annual North Carolina Folk Festival, is one of the fastest-growing destination events in the Southeast, attracting people from across the U.S. to downtown Greensboro each September. The festival is a FREE admission, three-day event featuring performing groups representing a diverse array of cultural traditions from around the world on multiple stages, including continuous music and dance performances, a makers marketplace, regional and ethnic foods, festival merchandise and more. The 2022 North Carolina Folk Festival will take place in downtown Greensboro September 9 through 11. Additional information is available at www.ncfolkfestival.com.