

ABOUT TALIESIN'S HILLSIDE THEATER

HILLSIDE THEATER. Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1902 for his aunts who operated and owned a progressive coed boarding school on the family property in Wyoming Valley, Wisconsin, the theater was originally planned as the gymnasium for the school complex at the Hillside location. It was constructed in 1903 and used as a gymnasium until 1915 when the school closed. It remained unoccupied until 1932 when Wright, founding the Taliesin Fellowship, redesigned it as a theater for dance, music and drama, all a vital part of life at Taliesin. It was destroyed by fire in 1952, and in 1953 reconstructed by Wright as the theater we know today, a beautiful and important platform from which to display and share the creative life of Taliesin and its residents. The Theater is cherished for its intimate setting, clear acoustics, and stunning architecture and is used as a treasured venue for concerts, lectures, plays, and other cultural presentations.

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THE PROGRAM

July 10, 2016, Hillside Theater at Taliesin, 7:30 pm

Program – July 10, 2017

Finnegans Wake

featuring

**William Furry
Bill Rintz
John C. Van Orman**

Selections for this evening's concert will be announced by the band.

Finnegans Wake will offer a short "stretch-break" mid-way through the concert.

This concert is made possible with funding in part from the Spring Green Area Arts Coalition and the Wisconsin Arts Board.

ABOUT FINNEGANS WAKE

Finnegans Wake is an American band formed in 1973 at the County Cork Pub in Springfield, Illinois. John Van Orman added William Furry and Bill Rintz as back-up musicians during his normal weekly gigs at the Pub (and later, for a short while, Tim McKean as well), which soon evolved into the band, Finnegans Wake, named after the James Joyce novel. The three men, bound by a love of traditional American and British Isles music became favorites on the Springfield music scene, and eventually toured the Midwest and the Ozarks in an area circumscribed by Minneapolis, St. Louis, Mountain View, Arkansas, and Rockford, Illinois. They continue touring to this day.

Band members have always been instrumentally adventurous and through the years have added tin whistles, bodhran, glockenspiel, finger cymbals, spoons, mandolin, harmonium, harmonica, oud, triangle, temple blocks, jingle bells, and hurdy-gurdy to their instrumental line-up. Their musical repertoire has consisted of traditional ballads, sea chanteys, fiddle tunes, and Van Orman originals. Their collection of traditional music has been deeply researched and/or collected from the field.

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ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

William Furry is currently Executive Director of the Illinois Historical Society. He graduated from the University of Illinois Springfield with a BA in English in 1985, and an MA in Literature in 1995. He served 4 years in the Navy. He was staff writer, then editor of the Illinois Times newspaper for 14 years, before his work at the Illinois Historical Society. In 2001 he edited *The Preacher's Tale* published through the University of Arkansas Press. He is also the co-editor of *Tramping Across America: Travel Writings of Vachel Lindsay* and the *Golden Book of Springfield*. In addition, he was researcher and script consultant for two PBS documentaries, "James Jones: Reveille to Taps" and "The Lincolns of Springfield, Illinois."

Bill is an accomplished classical guitarist who also plays harmonium, glockenspiel, banjo, penny whistle, concertina and bodhran. Besides performing with Finnegans Wake, he also performs with various small ensembles in the Springfield area.

Bill Rintz – In addition to performing with Finnegans Wake, Bill was also a founding member of the Allen Street Stringband and the Sangamon Valley Hoedowners (which also featured old-time fiddler Floras Lamb, and blind mandolin player, Ivan Dodge). The Allen Street Stringband was originally formed sometime around 1981 with Bill Rintz on fiddle, Dave Landreth on banjo, and Ed Hawkes on guitar. All were accomplished players of old-time music, and the group quickly became known as one of the Midwest's bands for old-time traditional music. From 1983 to 1995 the group was a staple of the music festival at Silver Dollar City in Branson, Mo. They also performed at the Illinois State Fair, the Old State Capitol, and folk festivals throughout the Midwest. Rintz and Landreth collected a tune they dubbed "The Red Hills Polka" now commonly performed by various musicians and dance bands including Bob Holt, on his 1998 Rounder recording, "Got a Little Home to Go To." Rintz's main instruments continue to be the fiddle and mandolin, but he also plays tin whistle on occasion.

Bill Rintz hosted 2 weekly radio shows on radio station WSSR 91.9 FM. Springfield (later WSSU, then WUIS) – one from 1975 – 1997 entitled "Folk Festival," which focused on folk and old-time music; and one from 1987 – 1997, entitled "Bluegrass Breakdown," which focused primarily on bluegrass music.

John C. Van Orman, whose repertoire and performing style has been described as "hard core folk" began playing music professionally in South Dakota in 1971. He, William Furry, and Bill Rintz formed Finnegans Wake in 1973, and have been playing together ever since.

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS (cont.)

Van Orman's solo career has been noteworthy as well. John is a multi-instrumentalist and singer, and has performed regionally in the Midwest and in the Ozarks. Here's what Tom Irwin of the Illinois Times had to say: "On Saturday evening comes John Van Orman, known to Springfield folkies as a founding member of the area folk ensemble Finnegans Wake. As an award winner, folk center director, hurdy-gurdy player, singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, instrument builder and world traveler, the man is a fabulous treasure-trove of all things folk-music oriented and a gifted performer as well...This is a wonderful thing folks, go enjoy."

Van Orman's original tunes have won him Minnesota Music Academy awards, and have been recorded by Boiled in Lead, Bill Hinckley and Judy Larson, Sherry Minnick, and the Flash Girls. Tom Surowicz of the Twin Cities Reader described him as "a first-rate original folksong writer and...rather a crusty specialist in British Isles traditional music;" while Jim Meyer of the Minneapolis Star Tribune refers to him as "a cult figure on the local folk circuit." John's performances may be found archived at the University of Minnesota's Al Haug/New Riverside Café collection at the Performing Arts Archive, Manuscripts Division at the Elmer L. Andersen Library, and, with Finnegans Wake in the University of Illinois at Springfield Archives/Special Collections, Harvey Koplo Papers, 1974-1981 collection.

In addition to his musical work, John has also been a musical instrument builder, an art studio shop foreman, and always, a scholar. He holds an MA in Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies from the University of Kansas, and a BA in Cultural Anthropology from Hamline University. In 1995 he traveled to China in order to study performance on China's oldest stringed instrument, the *guqin*, his research on the instrument being published in academia, and earning him honors including the Sidney DeVere Brown Award. His graduate thesis was focused on the music traditions of the Turkic-speaking peoples of Siberia, a subject in which he had become interested after visiting the Altai Republic. He was a FLAS Fellowship recipient in support of his studies at Ivano Franko University in L'viv, Ukraine where he conducted research on the blind minstrels of that nation.

He has served on the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Folk Festival, and of the Arkansas Craft School. He was Music Director at the Ozark Folk Center from 2000 to 2006. From 2010 to 2014, he was instructor of Anthropology, Sociology, and Russian culture and language at Ozarka College. In 2009, John released "Love Liquor and the Lord," an album primarily composed of original songs.