

Matching Orange Biography

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The traditional music world contains two types of musicians: the ones that stay grounded in what has come before them and the ones that push the limits. Matching Orange is the rare group that walks this line to perfection. Distinguished by their high-energy playing and brightly colored music folders, the sound they create is interesting and unique while maintaining a familiar feeling of age-oldness. The result is an alluring complexity. Wherever these three musicians travel, they are greeted with acclaim. Whether playing for the contra dances they cut their teeth on, jamming at a local pub, or performing a formal concert, audiences are always excited to hear such a refreshing approach to traditional fiddle music. Featuring Eric McDonald (mandolin), Eric Eid-Reiner (piano), and Brendan Carey Block (fiddle), the band creates a swirling level of intensity, sometimes gritty, sometimes pure, and always engaging. Each Matching Orange musician takes full advantage of diverse musical backgrounds, with extensive training in folk, classical, jazz, and other traditions.

BRENDAN CAREY BLOCK has been performing on the fiddle since he was 10 years old. For five summers he received scholarships from the New Hampshire Highland Games and the Saint Andrews Society of New Hampshire enabling him to travel to Cape Breton, Nova Scotia to immerse himself in Cape Breton music. He has been a member of the renowned Glengarry Bhoys and currently performs with the Boston based Annalivia and his own duo project with Flynn Cohen. In May of 2009, Brendan was selected by the New Hampshire Council of the Arts to represent the state at the Library of Congress and The Kennedy Center Millennium Stage in Washington DC. The concert series was put on by the American Folklife center. Brendan was one of the youngest performers selected for this honor. Brendan has performed with countless notable artists, including Natalie MacMaster, Jerry Holland, Alasdair Fraser, Cherish the Ladies, Brenda Stubbert, Gaelic Storm, Jay Ungar and many others.

ERIC MCDONALD was a founding member of Jaded Mandolin, a teen string band that became a local phenomenon in the Boston area. He plays regularly with Ari & Mia Friedman and tours with The Dave Rowe Trio. As a mandolin accompanist, Eric has performed with songwriters including Chris O'Brien, Thea Hopkins, Jess Yoakum, and Patty Keough. In 2008, he served as music director and accompanist for The Actors' Shakespeare Project's production of "The Tempest." The Wall Street Journal said "Eric McDonald performs his incidental music in full view of the audience, rattling a thunder sheet and tootling on a slide whistle with the flair of an old-time radio sound-effects man." He is currently a student at Berklee College of Music, where he studies under John McGann and Eugene Friesen. When not learning himself, he teaches privately and at Maine Fiddle Camp during the summer.

ERIC EID-REINER performs throughout New England with numerous groups, including the Reiner Family Band, and the Rachel Cole Band (Jewish pop/rock). He grew up listening to fiddle music and attending camps from Vermont to Cape Breton. In late 2007, Eric was invited to perform with Ashley Macisaac, Tony Demarco and John Doyle. Next,

in early 2009, he appeared on Brian O'Donovan's "Celtic Sojourn: A Boston Session," where he performed with fiddler Oisín McAuley, The band The Hay Brigade and a number of other performers. Eric has released two CDs under his own name. The first is entitled: "Grand Tour: Traditional Music on Piano" and the second, "On A Meadowlark Night" was released in April 2009.