

Workshops

John McCutcheon

John McCutcheon is not only a masterful composer, musician and performer, he is an eloquent and experienced instructor/lecturer. As in his concert performances, these workshops are informal, informative, and entertaining. Whether unlocking the mysteries of the hammer dulcimer for an instrumental novice or examining the question of violence in our schools with families, administrators, and teachers, John's approach is one of respect, encouragement, and hope. Music, anecdotes, and insight are staples of these unique and challenging offerings.

Hammer Dulcimer

Undoubtedly the best-known hammer dulcimer player in North America, John McCutcheon is an acknowledged world master of this rare and beautiful instrument. He is, likewise, a widely published and recorded instructor of hammer dulcimer technique. His Homespun Tapes audio and video instructions methods are the bestselling hammer dulcimer instructional materials in the world. This workshop offers three different levels of instruction:

An Introduction to the Hammer Dulcimer: in which the beginning or potential player becomes familiar with the set up, tuning, and basic playing techniques of the dulcimer.

Time: 90–120 minutes

Limit: none

Requirements of participants: no experience necessary, dulcimer is encouraged but not required, cassette or video recorder required.

Technical Requirements: flip chart & markers, PA for groups larger than 30

Intermediate Hammer Dulcimer: a more in-depth approach to dulcimer techniques and arranging ideas.

Time: 90–120 minutes

Limit: 20 participants

Requirements of participants: ability to learn tunes on your own, hammer dulcimer and cassette or video recorder required

Technical Requirements: flip chart & markers

Hammer Dulcimer Master Class: a unique opportunity for the advanced dulcimer player to get advanced instruction and individual critique.

Time: 90–120 minutes

Limit: 10 participants

Requirements of participants: ability to learn and arrange tunes on your own, hammer dulcimer, cassette or video recorder required

Technical Requirements: flip chart & markers

Songwriting

John McCutcheon is one of the most prolific and versatile of our modern songwriters. Whether he is writing for adults or for children his songs are marked by musicality, lyric detail and insight. He has conducted songwriting workshops around the world for adults and children (ages 7 and up) for years. In both group and individual settings the results are always surprising and frequently profound.

Time: 90–120 minutes

Limit: 30 for group process, 10 for Master Class

Requirements of participants: paper and writing materials for group process, 2 original songs for Master Class.

Technical Requirements: flip chart & markers

Crossing (Out) the Line: A New Look at Family/Children's Music

In this lecture/demonstration, multiple Grammy nominee John McCutcheon showcases his unique approach to music that is created for an all-ages audience. In both song and presentation, he argues, it is time to acknowledge the inherent musicality of our children and create a body of work that is appealing to entire families.

Time: 60–90 minutes

Limit: none

Requirements for participants: come prepared to sing

Technical Requirements: PA with 2 mics on boom stands, flip chart & markers

Culture and Community: Organizing in the New Century

John McCutcheon has worked intimately with community and labor groups for over a quarter century. An experienced organizer, he has gained valuable insights into the need for a natural wedding of community goals and cultural tools. How do you invest individuals and groups in goals and visions? How do you cross lines of gender, class, and race to build diversity in your neighborhood, organization, union? How do you build structures that are powerful enough to withstand the onslaught of media, money, and established power? In this “songspeech” (poetic lecture/demonstration) John traces historical examples, contemporary success stories, and posits a course for the future. Insightful, knowledgeable, and inspiring.

Time: 60–90 minutes

Limit: none

Requirements for participants: cassette or video recorder encouraged, come prepared to sing

Technical Requirements: PA with 2 mics on boom stands, flip chart & markers

Waging Peace: Nonviolence and Peace Studies in Our Schools

We teach mathematics as though the future of the planet depended on it, yet give no instruction in nonviolent responses to violence in our schools, our streets, our world. In this “songspeech” (poetic lecture/demonstration) John McCutcheon makes a case for examining the issues of war and violence “one child, one family, one school at a time.” Historical perspective, contemporary example, and a hopeful proposition for the future are tackled in this practical and common sense-based approach to one of the critical issues of our time.

Time: 60–90 minutes

Limit: none

Requirements for participants: cassette or video recorder encouraged, come prepared to sing

Technical Requirements: PA with 2 mics on boom stands, flip chart & markers