



**At Jefferson Center – Roanoke, VA
Spring 2010**

The Roanoke Valley is just 25 miles from the Franklin County end of the Virginia Heritage Music Trail, also known as the Crooked Road. Yet the cultural and psychological distance is much greater, especially in an age of fast-peaking trends, when traditions are measured by years instead of decades. Virginia's musical heritage and the social trends that complement it are being forgotten, even in a community that often says it is proud to be close to its roots.

Just recently, on February 3, 2010, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named The Crooked Road one of 2010's Dozen Distinctive Destinations in America. "This is where America learned to be America," says Joe Wilson, co-founder of The Crooked Road and chairman of the National Council for the Traditional Arts.

Jefferson Center has booked "Music From the Crooked Road," a production by the National Council for the Traditional Arts, for Saturday, April 17, 2010. But a stand-alone event would represent a missed opportunity to convey context and understanding of the historic roots of this art form. We propose also providing a critical mass of exhibits, panel discussions, workshops and public media exposure to build interest in the topic as well as attendance at the concert. We want to make sure that when music from the Crooked Road is played in Roanoke, our community audience will be curious about its origins and meaning and hungry to know more about what it they are hearing.

Every artist who performs at our concerts is asked to make time to broaden his or her impact through community outreach. That has included performing at schools and libraries and in unconventional locations such as shelters for the homeless and youth detention centers. We open rehearsals to school groups and encourage artists to mentor to small groups of Music Lab students.

So with that in mind, we have put together a comprehensive and exciting series of events and activities that will highlight life along Virginia's Music Heritage Trail, the Crooked Road!

1) Floyd Country Store event:



We will begin our journey with a trip to Floyd VA, where we will host an event at the Floyd Country Store. The Floyd Country Store will celebrate its 100th Anniversary in 2010 and is one of the vibrant venues along the Crooked Road.

Jefferson Center will produce an event on **March 27, 2010**, that will feature other musical performers from the Crooked Road. We will feature **From Wood to Singing Guitar** an Appalshop documentary film showcasing Wayne C. Henderson, the master musician and master luthier from the small town of Rugby, Virginia as well as a documentary about 82 year old fiddle maker Arthur Conner called **Uncovering the secrets of the Strad**. We will also feature the Round the Mountain Artisan Network which features artisans, farms, galleries and craft venues in Southwest Virginia plus much more!

2) History of Recording Lecture Demonstration and Exhibit



This lecture demonstration will juxtapose the state of the art equipment that the Music Lab at Jefferson Center features with antique recording devices that were used over the last 100 years. We will feature a lecture demonstration with Kinny Rorrer. Kinney Rorrer is a retired History teacher and is the perfect person to present this amazing presentation on the History of Recording in the Appalachian Mountains. He combines his love of history and music and has conducted numerous workshops on old-time music at various folk festivals. Kinny Rorrer is also known for his great work with Seth Williamson on Roanoke's WVTF Public Radio where he collaborates on two weekend programs.

Kinny Rorrer is a collector of antique recording machines and will offer a hands on presentation for the members of the Music Lab (Grades 6 – 12) as well as the public. Participants will be able to experience these amazing machines from the past, some of which are still in working order with all of their original parts, an accomplishment we doubt the latest state of the art equipment can boast.

3) Lecture/Demonstration: “Women in Mountain Music” featuring Elizabeth LaPrelle, Amber Collins, Emily Spencer and Martha Spencer and moderated by Jon Lohman from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.



Sara and Maybelle Carter, Texas Gladden, Roni & Patsy Stoneman, Kate Peters Sturgill, Ola belle Reed, Samantha Bumgarner, Lila Mae Ledford, Molly O’Day, Dolly Parton, Patsy Cline, Loretta Lynn, the list could go on and on. From the earliest days of recorded music, female musicians have made an important and influential impact on the sound and direction of mountain

music. It should be no surprise that the influence of female musicians in the region extends far and wide. Banjo playing woman alone impacted such luminaries as Ralph Stanley, who learned to play in the clawhammer style from his mother, Lucy Smith Stanley, North Carolina banjoist Clarence "Tom" Ashley learned to play from his Aunts Ary and Daisy, National Heritage Fellow and banjo player Morgan Sexton of Linefork, Kentucky, got his first lessons from his older sister Hettie.

This program will explore the influences and directions key female figures have made on the musicians traveling with the Crooked Road tour and will discuss the female musicians who have done a large part in helping to promulgate and preserve the traditional music of the region. Tour musicians Emily and Martha Spencer, Elizabeth Laprelle and Amber Collins will share the songs and personalities that have most greatly influenced them as musicians living, and creating along the Crooked Road as well as discuss the role of woman musicians playing today. Virginia State Folklorist Jon Lohman will moderate this unique session.

4) Lecture/Demonstration: “The Creative Process...Finding your voice within a tradition”
Featuring Eddie Bond, Sammy Shelor, Steve Barr, Jacob Eller, Wayne Henderson and
Josh Pickett and moderated by Jon Lohman from the Virginia Foundation for the
Humanities.



Often times, the sound of traditional music is viewed as static, unchanging, locked. This program will explore how musicians along the Crooked Road are able to find their own creative voice by building upon the deeply held traditions of the region. Participating artists include: Guitar legend and master luthier Wayne Henderson, whose guitar sound resembles that of a flat-picked guitarist, but is performed in his own, very unique method of playing with finger picks. Banjo icon Sammy Shelor, who comes from a long line of beloved musicians, helped remake bluegrass music for a new generation with the influential Lonesome River Band. Josh Pickett, the young hotshot flat-picked guitar player in No Speed Limit who draws heavily from blues and modern country to craft inventive guitar runs and imaginatively penned songs for his group. Steve Barr is one of the most energetic and imaginative banjo pickers in the country. With his unique sense of timing and inventiveness, he is set to emerge as a leading musical voice in bluegrass composition. Eddie Bond has been recognized in recent years as one of the next generation of old-time legends from Fries, Virginia. A masterful fiddler, wonderful songwriter, guitar player, and banjoist, Eddie’s unique talents have helped him craft his own sound by blending and re-imagining the different unique musical forms of the region. Kirk Sutphin will round out the panel by showcasing the style of banjo playing he learned under the tutelage of Fred Cockerham and Kyle Creed. Also a master of the Charlie Poole, two-finger style of banjo playing, Kirk will showcase the ways in which banjo has evolved both through his teachers and in his own hands. A conversation and musical performance moderated by state folklorist Jon Lohman, these artists will discuss how their sound was influenced by the musicians they learned from and how they are crafting their own unique musical voice.

5) Crooked Road - Master Instrument Makers Exhibit



We will feature an exhibit at Jefferson Center of musical instruments crafted by artist on the Crooked Road tour and along the Crooked Road and beyond. Some of the luthiers and instrument makers include Wayne Henderson, Randal Ellers, Kirk Sutphin and Jackson Cunningham and Arthur Conner plus many more. The Blue Ridge Institute will also display some of the instruments they have collected for the museum over the years including instruments by Audrey Hash and others.