

MASONTOWN

Fine Acoustic (Bluegrass) Music from Denver, CO
masontownmusic.com
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Eric Wiggs (guitar/vocals)
Mike Canney (mandolin)
Natalie Padilla (fiddle/vocals)
Bradley Morse (bass)

"Masontown is 4 corners of great music. 4 musicians hold up a new sound, delivering the creative reharmonization of a tenured melody. This progressive and heartening aesthetic is sure to last."

- Eli West (Cahalen Morrison & Eli West)

"Masontown's music is as high energy as the mountains they hail from! Their repertoire consists of delightful renditions of classic Bluegrass songs paired with exciting original tunes. The 'nationally acclaimed' fiddling is highly engaging and the talent and sheer joy of the musicians is striking!"

- Bridget Law (Elephant Revival)

"This is a very tight band. They're writing really cool tunes, great arrangements and playing with a confidence and taste usually reserved for the recording studio. Young bands rarely sound so cohesive! The Front Range has a new group to be reckoned with."

- Grant Gordy (Mr. Sun)

A new and enchanting sound has emerged from the hotbed of the Colorado roots music scene. Masontown, a young band with a concept as timeless as the Rocky Mountains, has alighted onto a bluegrass community that has already produced some of the best that the acoustic music world has to offer. But Colorado, and the wider world of modern music, hasn't quite heard this yet.

A lauded fiddle champion and classical violinist. A veteran bluegrass mandolin player and composer. One of Colorado's jazz guitar greats reborn as a flatpicking sensation. An upright bassist with roots running deep in the classical and jazz traditions. These are the individual elements that come together to create Masontown.

Masontown's sound is an exciting take on the American acoustic tradition. At once fresh and familiar, the group unites the sounds of bluegrass, old-time, folk, and new acoustic music into a sonic melting pot that hearkens back to our deep musical traditions while remaining defiantly modern in conception. Echoes of the poignant exploration of the Matt Flinner Trio blend with the fierce drive of Bill Monroe and the plaintive songcraft of Cahalen Morrison and Eli West. It's no surprise that the members of Masontown have shared the stage with many of these musical icons that their sound evokes.

The listening halls and dance floors of Colorado have already begun to hail the arrival of this new force in the acoustic music community. Masontown is a band on the move, driven to delight the ears, touch the hearts, and move the feet of generations of music lovers in Colorado and far beyond.

Eric Wiggs (guitar/vocals):

Hailing from Northern Alabama, guitarist and vocalist Eric Wiggs has been an integral part of Colorado's music scene for the past decade as a teacher and performer. After moving to Boulder to attain a Master's Degree in Jazz Performance, Eric soon fell in love with bluegrass music. His diverse musical background brings a fresh, sophisticated sound to Masontown.

Though starting his musical life on trumpet at the ripe age of 10, he came to his senses a few years later and started guitar so he could play rock and blues. Now, Eric wields flawless chops on the guitar, and his smooth voice captivates and tells stories through song effortlessly. With acoustic inspiration coming from local bands like Taarka, Elephant Revival, and the Railsplitters, Wiggs rarely plays jazz and blues anymore, though is still heavily sought after, and just may say yes to a gig or two on occasion.

Affectionately known as "Wiggy" to some, Eric can be found hosting bluegrass jams multiple nights a week, walking his adorable dogs with his girlfriend (sorry ladies he's taken) cooking up some sort of gluten free meal, teaching humans of all ages how to play guitar and bass, or combing and waxing his impressive mountain man beard.

Natalie Padilla (fiddle/vocals):

The sound of crisp leaves bristling between the evergreens, the creaking ebb and flow of boundless rivers carefully careening driftwood along the pristine peaks of the Gallatin Valley... Serenity is what the master fiddler Natalie Padilla Koob was immersed in from the very start. Beginning life in Bozeman, Montana she had the fortune to have the love and unquenchable desire to perform music instilled in her from her loving parents. After winning a fiddle championship at the National Old-time Fiddle Competition at the tender age of 8, she knew that music would play a profound part in the ensuing years of her life.

Passionately adhering to her artistic needs brought upon a relocation to the picturesque mountain state of Colorado where she furthered her musical knowledge by attaining a degree in violin performance from the University of Northern Colorado. Upon finding a sense of home here in Colorado's mountain villages, she decided to stay in the state after college and pick up a few more championships including: the 2015 Rockygrass Fiddle Champion, the Rocky Mountain Regional Grand Champion, 2015 National Young Adult Champion, and Weiser's National Twin Fiddling Champion with none other than her caring mother.

Not only astute in the crooked-folk idiom of Old-time and Bluegrass, she is equally accomplished in classical escapades being the Associate Concertmaster of the Greeley Philharmonic and performances with the National Repertory Orchestra, Breckenridge Music Festival, Colorado Music Festival, Colorado Bach Ensemble, Boulder Philharmonic, and Sphere Ensemble.

In all of these musical endeavours she still retains the purity of expression and interpretation that was gifted to her at a formative age in her beloved Gallatin Valley and that authentic expression she carries with her performance in the newest musical ensemble Masontown.

Mike Canney (mandolin):

Born and raised in the bluegrass capital of ... well it's a nice town, Milwaukee, WI, Mike began playing the mandolin at the age of 10. He learned to play while being snuck into late night jams and festivals in the area by his father (a banjo player, but we don't hold that against Mike). This explains both Mike's incredible prowess at knowing every tune you've never heard of (and quite frankly don't believe exists) and his incredible disdain for any tune with "Breakdown" or "Special" in the title.

After completing his graduate studies in Boston, he moved to Seattle for his doctoral studies in Biomedical Engineering at the University of Washington, and formed the band "The Loose Digits", playing shows throughout the Pacific Northwest from 2006-2009 and recording 2 EPs. At the end of 2009, he moved to Lyon, France where he lived for 6 years and formed the group "Lyon Bluegrass Revival" from local French musicians and expats. Masontown is the fifth bluegrass band that Mike has been involved with over the past 20 years

As fate would have it, he now lives just a stone's throw from our own little piece of France here in Colorado: Lyon[s]. Mike brings a sophisticated approach to the traditional canon of American acoustic music, with a unique style, influenced by everyone from Bill Monroe to Pixinguinha. Just don't ask him to play a Breakdown ...

Bradley Morse (bass):

Bradley has taken a circuitous route to Colorado via the Midwest and northern Florida. After figuring out at a young age that playing the oboe didn't attract much interest from the ladies, he switched to the bass and quickly improved his love life as well as his love for playing music. While he started on the electric bass, his strong interest in playing "sustainable music" led him to an all-acoustic instrument, the upright bass. With the upright bass in hand, he excelled in both jazz and classical music at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville, where he completed a degree in music performance.

After moving to the Front Range, Bradley has been in constant demand and may be playing on a stage near you at this very moment. He currently plays in at least four bands (the Masontown members have trouble keeping count), which range in styles from bluegrass to whatever kind of music the Gasoline Lollipops play (we still don't know). His diverse musical background lends itself well to Masontown's intentionally untraditional sound.

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