

Memphis Dulcimer Gathering & Folk Festival 2007

Class Descriptions

Thomasina Levy

Singing Circle – All Levels – The first two instruments are the human heart (source of all rhythm) and the voice. Come join the group in a joyful hour of singing a variety of chants, songs, rounds, and sounds. Feel free to bring your own song or round to teach and present to the circle. No musical experience required.

Jamming and Playing with Others – Beginner to Intermediate – Mountain Dulcimer – Learn some easy songs on your instrument. Basic “Jamming Etiquette” will be discussed. We will spend time learning how to play with other musicians.

Minor Scales and Songs – Intermediate – Mountain Dulcimer – Songs in a minor tuning often have that “haunting” feeling. Some basic music theory will be presented. Learn how to tune and re-tune your dulcimer to minor modes from DAD. Come tuned to DAD and bring a capo. (Extra capos available from the instructor).

Arranging Songs on the Mountain Dulcimer – Advanced – This workshop will help give the participants skills to arrange songs in different keys. Student will be taught a familiar tune (Amazing Grace) in four different ways in order to see the various possibilities that can exist for one song. Then each person will be given blank tab paper and encouraged to try to arrange a song on his/her own.

Music Improvisation – All Instruments and All Levels – This a FUN workshop! Throw away the tab and bring your instruments for an inspiring session of music making in a supportive atmosphere. Improvisation is a moment-to-moment experience which allows a musician to take a leap from the familiar into the unknown.

Playing a Four String Dulcimer – Intermediate to Advanced – Mountain Dulcimer – In this workshop, students will be introduced to playing and chording a four stringed mountain dulcimer. Come tuned DADD and bring a capo. (Extra capos available from the instructor).

The 1-3-5 Tuning – Advanced – Mountain Dulcimer – Expand your horizons by learning a new tuning. This chromatic tuning will allow you to play traditional blues songs and non-traditional dulcimer tunes from the ‘30s and ‘40s. Come tuned to DAD.

Basic Rhythm and Timing – All Instruments and All Levels – They say that timing is everything. Learn how to read basic music notation from standard music sheets, as well as from dulcimer tablature. Time signatures, note values, and ‘bum diddies” will be discussed. Bring your hands for clapping.

Terry Lewis – Mountain Dulcimer

Bluegrass I – Novice – We will learn what makes Bluegrass music through songs such as In the Pines, Roll in My Sweet Baby’s Arms, and Salty Dog Blues.

Bluegrass II – Intermediate – Bring a capo. How to make your dulcimer sound like a bluegrass instrument and play songs such as Nine Pound Hammer, Little Maggie, John Henry, and John Hardy.

Waltz in the Key of D – Intermediate – Repertoire class – We will work on waltzes such as Shave the Donkey Waltz, Lovely Nancy, Mrs. Elders Welcome, Wangaretta Waltz, and The Cumberland Waltz.

Old Time Hymns – Intermediate – We will learn tunes such as Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine, Amazing Grace (keys of D and G), Church in the Wildwood, and Happy Land with four parts.

TablEdit – Introduction to TablEdit and how to use it to make dulcimer tablature. If you are already a user, bring your questions/problems, and we will try to work them out.

Fiddle Tunes – Intermediate – Repertoire class – We will work on fiddle tunes such as Butcher’s Gap, Old Yeller Dog, and Old Gray Cat.

First Position I – Novice – We will learn how to play some favorite tunes by playing across the strings in the first position. We will play these tunes and not go above the 3rd fret: Buck-Eyed Rabbit, Cripple Creek, Soldier's Joy. We will also learn the D scale in three positions.

First Position II – Intermediate – We will learn more favorite tunes by playing across the strings in the first position: Arkansas Traveler, Whiskey Before Breakfast, Gray Cat on a Tennessee Farm, Flop-Eared Mule.

Pam Lewis – Baritone Mountain Dulcimer

Baritone Dulcimer – Introduction to Baritone Dulcimer in the key of D – How to tune the baritone dulcimer in the key of D, how to use DAD tabs in the baritone; Tunes such as Buck-Eyed Rabbit and Happy Land with harmony.

Baritone Dulcimer – Tunes in the Key of D – Common tunes such as Wildwood Flower and Seneca Square Dance; learn chords to use in backing up DAD dulcimers.

Baritone Dulcimer – More Tunes in the Key of D – Southwind, Whiskey Before Breakfast, Old Molly Hare.

Jim Miller – Various Instruments

World Rhythms – All Levels and All Instruments – Covers Latin, African, and Indian rhythms. Instruments provided or bring your own.

Beginning Clawhammer Banjo – Covers the clawhammer “lick”, chords, and several simple melodies.

How to Jam – All Levels and All Instruments – covers the ins and outs of jamming. Why we do what we do when we jam. Includes tips on getting the most out of jam time as well as jam etiquette.

Beginning Guitar – Covers tuning, scales, chords. Discusses strums, bass runs, and pick technique.

Beginning Mandolin – Covers chords, scales, pick technique, and several simple melodies.

Flatpicking Guitar – Intermediate to Advanced – Covers pick technique, scales and chords. Several common fiddle tunes are taught.

Ear Training for Mountain Dulcimer – All Levels – covers intervals, scales and chords. Designed to help you hear melodies in order to become better at playing by ear.

Fiddle Tunes Go South – Mountain Dulcimer – All Levels – Explores rhythmic variations on several familiar fiddle tunes. Includes tab for Mountain Dulcimer and Percussion. Percussion instruments provided or bring your own.

Rick Thum – Hammered Dulcimer

New Players – Learn the basics you need to get started playing your dulcimer. We will learn a tune

Beginning Jam Tune – Learn the tune Whiskey Before Breakfast

A Minor Tune – All Levels – “Missouri” – a fun tune in the Key of E minor.

Embellishments – All Levels – We will explore ways to embellish your music, Questions welcome. There are many ways to make your music sound better.

Chords – All Levels – How to find and Use Them. We will learn an easy approach to finding and playing chords.

Syncopation – All Levels – We will learn the song “Pleasure House Rag” and several different syncopated patterns.

Old Timey Tune – All Levels – We will learn June Apple, a real toe-tapper.

Christmas Song – All Levels – Learn “Angels We Have Heard on High” with a simple method to embellish it.

Lee Cagle – Mountain Dulcimer

New Players I will focus on the basic techniques involved in playing, including tuning, strumming patterns and reading tablature. No previous musical experience is necessary. Loaner instruments are available. Friday and Saturday sessions are the same.

New Players II will continue to build on the techniques learned in Mountain Dulcimer I. Techniques will be practiced while learning new songs to build your repertoire. While attendance in Mountain Dulcimer I is helpful, it is not required. Loaner instruments are available. Friday and Saturday sessions are the same.

Jam Time Favorites – Beginners – This class will present songs that are commonly played during folk jams at festivals and other events, as well as tips for playing during jams.

Songs in the Key of G – Advanced Beginner to Intermediate – Many times people are unable to play in groups with others because they do not know how to change keys. This class will introduce the player to understanding how to play in keys other than D.

Larkin Kelley Bryant –Mountain Dulcimer

Renowned Mountain Dulcimer player Larkin Kelley Bryant will join us for this special workshop on Introduction to Fingerpicking in DAD. This workshop is for beginning players and will introduce the fingerpicking style for which Larkin is famous.