

2025 Workshops

All workshop times 45 mins

The Playmakers workshops and presentations bring you up close and personal with many of the festival artists – designed for EVERYONE whether you're a musician or not. Come to learn, enjoy and be inspired!

UKE WITH MINKY

While you're packing for the festival, don't forget to bring your trusty ukulele, for a fun Saturday morning jam session. Maybe you only know a couple of chords or you're a uke virtuoso, but all uke players are welcome to join in and get their ukuleles singing!

BLUEGRASS GUITAR WITH MARCUS CHURCH

Join Marcus on a fun and humorous journey around the fret board covering the "ins" and "outs" of being a bluegrass guitarist. Ins include being in tune, being in time and being "instead" of playing mandolin. Outs include how to outshine everyone else, outside playing (both intentional and not) and being out of gigs! Guaranteed good time guitar.

BLUEGRASS MANDOLIN WITH LAWSON MACKRIELL

Lawson breaks down the fundamentals of bluegrass mandolin with a focus on fun, fun and fun. Expect insights into technique, jamming etiquette, where and why the mandolin fits so snugly into the bluegrass genre, and beyond. He promises heaps of beyond...

MEET THE INADEQUATES

Come meet the Inadequates 'cause if you don't, no one will be there! This session might be empty so if you want a quiet room to catch up on some sleep, this could be your chance. Seriously though, the lads promise to discuss plenty about their writing and arranging processes, particularly in the context of who they are ripping off and why.

MARK CAIN: TUBE E OR NOT TUBE E

Multi-instrumentalist and world music aficionado, Mark presents "Tube E or not Tube E: discovering the joy and challenges of making simple wind instruments."

SIGN OF FOUR: EXPANDING SONIC POSSIBILITIES

In this participatory workshop Sign of Four will demonstrate and guide you in expanding the sonic possibilities of your acoustic instrument using various modes of amplification and subtle effects. Shenzo in collaboration with Sign of Four will demonstrate effects created using the amplified viola using traditional and extended techniques.

BLUEGRASS PARKWAY: VOCAL WORKSHOP

Bluegrass Parkway has become well known all around the country for their very successful bluegrass harmony singing workshops. The band guarantees to have everyone up and singing their harmony part by the completion of the session. BGP will show you the song, give a brief history of how it fits into the bluegrass genre and then set about dissecting each part for you to try. After breaking up for some special coaching on your part, the entire group comes together to 'raise the roof' as the band likes to put it.

THE ELLIS GUITARS WORKSHOP: WHERE CRAFTSMANSHIP MEETS SOUND!

From handpicking the finest tonewoods to shaping, bracing, and fine-tuning every detail, in this workshop you'll witness the entire process that brings Ellis guitars to life. As part of this experience, Craig Sinclair will give you the chance to hear and feel their incredible sound firsthand. Expect a dynamic, hands-on journey filled with engaging stories, valuable insights, and a deeper appreciation for the craft behind every guitar.

SIGN OF FOUR: FIDDLE FRIENDZY

Join Shenzo Gregorio, Daniel Drieberg and Jude Iddison from Sign of Four in an exploration of colours, tones, textures, and roles of traditional and extended range violins.

PAPER COLLAR PICKERS: UNPICKING THE PIEDMONT BLUES

Rod and Craig take you on a journey through the ragtime blues styles that emerged on the East Coast of America in the early 1920's, through to their own take on this vibrant and bouncy style of guitar picking. Expect plenty of inspiring insights into techniques old and new, and a glimpse at some of the types of vintage instruments that these early pioneers used.

BECOME A CELLIST OVERNIGHT: INTRODUCING THE OCTAVE VIOLA

Shenzo Gregorio in collaboration with Sign of Four demonstrates how a violinist or violist can 'become a cellist overnight'. In this participatory workshop you can play three David Guscott Australian made octave violas (chin cello) and listen to Shenzo demonstrating the many roles this amplified instrument can assume using traditional and extended techniques and a loop pedal.

THE VIOL FAMILY WITH ANDREW TAIT

The viol family of instruments is an ancient form that originated through Spain from the middle east to Europe in the 15th century. Andrew's presentation will introduce the audience to this lesser-known family and along the way unfold the story of a lost, though now rediscovered and restored Viola Da Gamba (bass viol). JS Bach was one year old when this instrument was made by one of the most famous luthiers of the 17th century. Come see and hear it!

THE ACCORDION ACCORDING TO EDDY JAY

At this one-off workshop, you'll learn how ergonomics and aesthetics have informed a trail-blazing approach to instrument-making. Hear traditional instruments made and improved with new technologies, and gain insight into the intricacy of components from reeds to bellows that combine to make 'Jay Concertinas' a prized jewel.

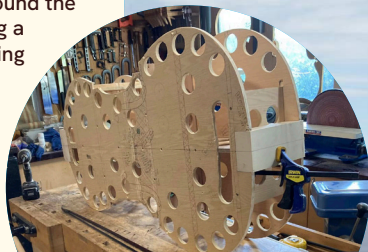
SUNBURSTING A MANDOLIN WITH PAUL DUFF

The sunburst finish has been created on instruments for centuries and can now stand as a signature of each individual luthier's work. From the earliest examples created unintentionally through years of wear to the factory styles of the early 20th century; the sunburst is almost an artform. Paul will take you through a brief history of the various forms of the sunburst and then create an example of his style right in front of your eyes.

STATHSPEY FIDDLE WITH FIONA DAVIDSON & PAUL JOHNSON

Join Fiona for a fun fiddle session, exploring the playing of a "Stathspey". This workshop is suitable for all skill levels and covers techniques, bowings and styles that are pretty cool to learn. Paul will be there on guitar showing us flat picking, chords and giving insights on accompaniment.

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