

In just a few weeks, we will gather in beautiful Bar Harbor, Maine for the 2025 edition of the Acadia Festival of Traditional Music & Dance. Thank you for joining us! I'm so excited to have this opportunity to work together on the music faculty!

******As we mentioned in a previous email, we've created a [password protected faculty reference page](#) on our website where we're archiving important emails like this one, PDF attachments, schedules, etc. so you can find it all in one place. The password is: [tradfaculty2025](#). We will add to this page as things become available and keep it up to date with the latest information.******

This email contains important information you'll need to prepare for the festival, so please read it entirely regarding:

- Arrival & Departure
- Your Teaching & Performance Schedule
- Music Program Philosophy and Curriculum, including specifics about:
 - Morning "Core" Instrument classes & how they are grouped
 - Afternoon Community Music Events: Faculty-led Jam Sessions, Community Singing Sessions, & Open Bands for Social Dance
 - Afternoon Enrichment Workshops & Faculty-Led Ensembles
 - Evening Jam Sessions & Social Dances
 - Student Concert
- Faculty Concerts
- Merch Info

Arrival & Departure

AFTMD runs from Sunday, June 22 – Saturday, June 28 (departure by 9:00). Please arrive at camp no later than 3:30 on Sunday, June 22. Information about getting to the C.O.A. campus (including ride sharing) can be found on the [transportation page](#) of our website. We recommend arriving as early as possible so you have time to check into your room/unpack, check in your merch, get acquainted with where things are, etc.

We will have an all-faculty orientation meeting at 4:45 on Sunday on the porch of Deering (same building as Registration), followed by dinner at 5:30, and an opening celebration concert at 7:00. All faculty will be invited to perform a tune or a few steps in the opening celebration (curated by Kieran Jordan, Dance Director, and me). This will be followed by a short social dance with callers Will Mentor and Heather McAslan and an open band led by Armand Aromin and Ben Gagliardi. You are encouraged to play/dance, meet folks, and have fun!

Your Teaching & Performance Schedule

An overview of the daily schedule at AFTMD can be found [here](#). In general, all instrumental instructional periods are 75-minutes in length. There will be two periods of "Core Instrument" classes each morning (9:00-10:15 & 10:45-12:00), and two periods of enrichment (workshops,

jam sessions, community singing sessions, community social dances, and faculty-led ensembles) in the afternoon (1:15-2:30 & 3:00-4:15). Faculty concerts will take place Monday-Thursday evenings, with sound check times in the late afternoon.

Complete schedules for all [afternoon workshops](#), and [concerts](#) are available on the [password protected faculty page](#).

Morning “Core” Instrument classes & how they are grouped

The morning Core Instrument classes will be grouped as follows: Moose (a.k.a, “From the Ground Up”), Seal (a.k.a. “Skill Building”), Bear (a.k.a. “Nuance & Detail”), and Eagle (a.k.a. “Intensive Artistic Development”) we tried to be inclusive of Maine wildlife! These names exist because at AFTMD, we have chosen to define our classes not by the usual LEVELS / “how advanced is this student”, but instead by GROUPS / “what sort of instruction & learning experience takes place in the class”. To help with your class preparation, we have put descriptions of each group – and what you can expect for teaching it! – on the [password protected faculty page](#). We highly recommend you take a few minutes to read this, as it will clarify the kind of skills and material that students will be expecting to learn in each of your classes.

Some students have expressed concern that they may be “advanced” in one particular musical style but not in another. We understand this! The “animal” groups do NOT assume that a student has a consistent level of technique or repertoire in all styles, but rather describe things like: how quickly they learn by ear, how comfortable they are getting around their instrument without guidance, how experienced they are with implementing bowing / chord / fingering patterns, etc.

Morning Core Instrument classes should be progressive throughout the week (or, for Fiddle instructors teaching in the Fiddlers’ Shuffle, across a double-period on the same day). Therefore, students are encouraged to pick a group and stick with it for the entire week. That said, AFTMD students are always free to attend any class they like – *with the understanding that their presence won’t affect the pace, skill areas, or material that you are teaching!* Should you have any “guest” students in your class who are significantly more or less experienced than the rest of the class, please proceed with your planned lesson.

Afternoon Community Music: Faculty-led Jam Sessions, Community Singing Sessions, & Open Bands for Social Dance

During the week, each music faculty member will lead a “Community Music” event – a Jam or Community Singing Session, or an Open Band for social dancing. At AFTMD, we believe that these faculty-led sessions are an important part of our students’ learning experience, as it is a chance for them to *play* with you, their musical heroes and role models! Please plan to encourage lots of community-friendly repertoire, while also creating an organic space for students to learn and practice important skills, such as how to take turns leading/suggesting

tunes, promote positive session etiquette, learn new tunes/songs “on the fly”, know what to do when they don’t know the tune or song, tastefully try out playing parts that aren’t the core melody (ie. variations, harmonies, ‘comping parts, etc – as appropriate to the tradition), etc. How you foster these skills is completely up to you – we trust your teaching expertise and approach! – but please do think of this as an educational opportunity of great value to your students. We have provided our students with a short list of [“Favorite Acadia Trad Session Tunes”](#) that you might like to draw on in these settings.

Community Singing Sessions and Open Bands are all-level gatherings, while the instrumental Jams are divided into “Relaxed-Pace” and “Fast-Paced”. Please help maintain a fun, encouraging atmosphere appropriate to each group!

A note on social dance at AFTMD: Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement, which can be found [here](#) on our website, summarizes our aim to reduce barriers and discomfort for participants to the best of our ability. To that end, we encourage calling/teaching social dance using gender neutral language, whether this takes place in scheduled dances or informal sessions where dancing might happen. We understand that each of you may bring different approaches and experiences to this. We want to be sure that we can create an environment for you, and for our students, where everybody feels comfortable, confident and safe — so that we can just enjoy music and dancing together!! Our Admin Director, Heather McAslan, is a dance caller with a decade of experience in positional and gender-free calling. If you think you might want to call a social dance(s) at some point in the week – which we welcome, for those of you who do! – let us know, and we can send along Heather’s helpful suggestions for how to approach this.

Afternoon Enrichment Workshops & Faculty-Led Ensembles

The afternoon enrichment workshops are stand-alone 75-minute classes that explore specific topics in trad music and dance. Though some topics certainly suggest a certain instrument and/or level of experience (i.e. “Accompanying Songs on a Melody Instrument” or “Building Ease & Fluency with Learning by Ear”), enrichment workshops are generally all-level and open to any student who wishes to attend. Please plan workshops that will be fun and engaging for students with a wide range of playing experience.

The Faculty-Led Student Ensembles are all-level / all-instrument groups which meet for 75 minutes every afternoon. Material in these classes should be progressive throughout the week, building towards a group performance for the Student Concert on Friday night (5 minute concert slot per ensemble). In addition to learning new tunes, these groups will also explore essential ensemble skills (i.e. arranging, blending sounds, etc). This years’ ensemble leaders are:

- **Acadian / Québécois Ensemble** – Yann Falquet and Devon Léger
- **Celtic Ensemble** – Mairi Chaimbeul and Nicole Rabata
- **Old Time Ensemble** – Armand Aromin and Erynn Marshall

Evening Jam Sessions & Social Dances

We will have social dances on Sunday night after the opening concert (open band, led by Armand Aromin & Ben Gagliardi), and Friday night after the Student Concert (open band, led by our Artistic Work Study Students). There will be informal sessions and jamming every night as well. While these are not explicitly led by faculty, you are encouraged to participate as much as possible, as students relish getting to spend this special musical time with you. That said, we also acknowledge the need to be “off-duty” or have personal space, an earlier bedtime, etc! Please take care of yourself and honor your needs.

Student Concert

On Friday night, we close out the camp with a Student Concert, featuring performances that are student-led and created. You are NOT expected to create performance pieces in any of your classes, as we are trying to encourage students to take creative initiative for the evening. After all, this is THEIR concert! Students who are less experienced performers but wish to participate in the concert with some faculty support are encouraged to join one of the three Faculty-Led Student Ensembles, which meet each afternoon (see above). These three groups WILL perform in the concert, with a 5-minute performance slot each, as will the Moose Fiddle & Guitar and Dance students.

Faculty Concerts

There are gala concerts each night in Gates Auditorium featuring our teaching faculty. Please refer to your personal schedule above for your assigned performance and soundcheck times. If you like, you can see all the [concert line-ups here](#). To facilitate collaboration, we have given each of you a concert partner(s) with whom to share the performance slot, but it will be up to your group to program your concert set as you wish. Our hope is that these sets will include at least some collaboration, however you might decide to each play something solo as well, or invite other faculty members to join you at some point. We’re leaving the details up to you and we know it will be brilliant! We do ask that you coordinate carefully together to make sure that the music and stage banter doesn’t go over your allotted time slot (our stage manager will be there to help you with that). We all know that faculty concerts can get pretty long, and we’re trying to leave our audiences “wanting more!”. As rehearsal time will be tight at camp, you might want to brainstorm some performance ideas with your concert partner(s) ahead of time via email, phone, or Zoom.

Each concert will conclude with a finale number, with ALL featured performers from that night playing together. We are asking the closing set performers for each concert to coordinate this by picking a couple tunes that everyone is likely to know and passing that info on to the folks performing before the concert starts.

Merch Info

- AFTMD will be happy to sell your merch in our “Trad Trader” store. Our Trad Trader Team this year is Kristen Spalding & Alice Slater, please tell them thank you for taking this on and keeping things running smoothly when you meet them!
- Due to limited space, each faculty member may check in a max of 4 titles of CDs, plus 2 instructional items (tune books, DVDs, etc.) We will not be able to accommodate “soft” items like t-shirts or bandanas.
- CDs will all be sold for \$20 each, and the artist will receive \$16.50. Books/DVDs will be sold for \$30 and the artist will get \$26.50. The cut we take will help to cover any credit card processing fees, etc. we incur.
- On the night of your concert, we’ll make sure your CDs are in the back of the concert hall for concert-goers to purchase (no separate check-in and check-out procedure.)
- You will be responsible for all taxes (sales and otherwise) on the merch money you are paid when you check-out.
- Merch check-in will be in Deering (where Registration and the Trad Trader are located) on Sunday, June 22 from 2:00 - 4:15 and again on Monday during the second part of lunch hour from 12:30 - 1:00.
- Merch check-out will be in Deering on Friday, June 27 from 12:30 - 2:30.
- We’ll have an inventory form for you to fill out / pick up and it’s on the faculty web page in case you want to print it out and bring it filled out when you arrive (if not, we’ll have copies on hand for you to fill out.)
- Payment for sales will be sent within a week after the festival by PayPal or Bank Transfer, the same as what you chose for payment for your contract. (Please remember that any PayPal fees are the artist’s responsibility.)

Thanks for reading! Our team has been working hard to plan a dynamic week of immersive music and dance, and we really appreciate all that you contribute to making this vision a wonderful, joyful reality! If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out. We’re happy to help!

Cheers,

Mari
(and April, Kieran & Heather)