

# ALASDAIR FRASER DIRECTS THE SAN FRANCISCO SCOTTISH FIDDLERS



Friday, April 24, 8:00PM

## Regents' Theatre

Valley Center for the Performing Arts  
Holy Names University  
3500 Mountain Boulevard  
Oakland, CA 94619

Tickets at:

[brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com)  
or 800-838-3006

\$20 general admission

\$12 for children 12 and under

Saturday, April 25, 7:30PM

## Sherwood Hall

Salinas Community Center  
940 N. Main Street  
Salinas, CA 93906

Tickets at:

[Tickets.com](http://Tickets.com)

Sherwood Box Office:  
831-758-7477

Mon.-Fri. 10am to 5pm

\$20 general admission

\$12 for children 12 and under

\$15 group discount tickets

Sunday, April 26, 3:00PM

## Lincoln Theater

Napa Valley  
On the historic grounds of the  
Veterans Home of California  
100 California Drive  
Yountville, CA 94599

Tickets at:

[www.lincoltheater.com](http://www.lincoltheater.com)

Lincoln Box Office:

707-944-1300

\$20 general admission

\$12 for children 12 and under

\$15 group discount tickets

Picture a stage filled with over 100 musicians including fiddlers, piano, drums, cellos, guitars, harps and even a harmonica, projecting a sound lively as a dance band, as majestic as a symphony orchestra. Imagine a group that creates such a two-way sense of fun and joy between musicians and audience that people spontaneously get out of their seats and dance in the aisles whether or not they know the steps to the jigs and reels pouring forth from the stage. Front this merry group of music-makers with Scottish master fiddler Alasdair Fraser, whose humor, passion and charismatic playing set the tone, and you'll have a rough idea what it's like to attend a concert with The San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers: an evening packed with tunes, songs, and dances.



Founded in 1986 by Alasdair and friends, the group has grown to over 200 members from all over Northern California, the US and beyond. Varying widely in age and backgrounds, the fiddlers are drawn together by their love of Celtic traditional music. Prized in the group is the ability to play by ear, to feel the music deep in one's soul, and be enough in the moment to follow spontaneous changes of direction during performances.

Many members know hundreds of tunes by heart and love nothing better than to get together and play. They can be heard individually and in small groups throughout the year at contra dances, pub sessions and Scottish festivals. The large group (sometimes more than 100!) gets together annually for performances which range from a spring concert series in the San Francisco Bay Area, tours of Northern California (1995) and Alaska (1999), to big concerts in impressive settings such as Anchorage's Atwood Hall (1999) and the Lake Tahoe Summer Music Festival (2004).

Alasdair Fraser, musical director of the group, ranks among the finest interpreters of Scotland's music; his playing has earned worldwide critical acclaim. He maintains a busy performing schedule with musicians such as cellist Natalie Haas, guitarist Tony McManus and pianists Paul Machlis and Muriel Johnstone. He is the director of the Valley of the Moon Scottish Fiddling School in California, where he teaches every summer, and has been artist-in-residence at the prestigious Celtic Connections Festival in Glasgow for the past several years. His music is widely available on CD, and can also be heard on movie soundtracks from "Titanic," "The Last of the Mohicans," "Wyatt Earp," "Spiffire Grill" and "Treasure Planet."

For more interviews, images or press passes contact:

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[www.sfscottishfiddlers.org](http://www.sfscottishfiddlers.org)

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## Press Quotes



*“... this performance was a raucous, extemporaneous sampling of authentic music from the highlands and islands of Scotland. . . . no delayed standing ovation here; the audience instantaneously rose to its feet with the piece’s final notes. . . . the capacity crowd of young and old dancing before their seats and in the aisles was certainly a sight to behold.”*

—Shannon Gramse, Anchorage Daily News

*“... the massed San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers are an experience not to be missed.”*

—Jeff Kaliss, San Francisco Chronicle

*“... The evening is probably a lot like what communities experienced before television and films displaced music as community glue.”*

—Chris Watson, Santa Cruz County Sentinel

*“I love the way you can take this music anywhere and find kindred spirits resonating in just about any country in the world,” Fraser said. “The music itself is broad-ranging, from ancient-sounding to things that are harmonically quite complex.”*

—Christy Shauck, Sunnyvale Sun

*“When you get a bunch of fiddlers together, the sum is greater than its parts. It’s not reading music. It’s a bunch of independent spirits getting together. The temperature gets pretty hot when they all get going,” said Alasdair Fraser. . . . “The main thrust of this group is about community—living the music,” he explained. “The performance is very honest . . . We’re saying, “We love this music—what do you think?””*

—Paul Harrar, The Union Prospect

*“... When the whole club comes together, the sound is surprisingly harmonious for such a large group. Played by so many people, the slow laments become more plaintive and the faster jigs and reels more infectious. “The intensity of the music is wonderful,” [says SF Fiddle Club member and concert coordinator, Shelly Romalis], “but more than anything it’s the community that matters. Music off the printed page means nothing to me. When you’re together with a group of people who get such joy out of the music, that’s what’s exciting.”*

—Emily Wilson, San Francisco Examiner

*“Scottish music spans a few hundred years of styles,” notes Fraser. “So you go from get-wild get-down dance music to very beautiful 19th and 20th century composed tunes written by fiddlers and violinists who had a good command of the instrument.” . . . During performances, Fraser said, the musicians “are not reading music, they’re watching me. We can be halfway through and decide to play the tune again. We’re living the moment when we play,” he adds. “Mostly they’ve all memorized it, and they’re all investigating their own ornaments and ways of bowing.” “You haven’t heard anything until you’ve heard 100 fiddlers on stage together [said club member, Howard Booster]. Most everybody has a day job—there’s a cardiologist, a mathematician and engineers like me—but rehearsing and playing with Alasdair pulls the group up to a certain level.”*

—Diane Peterson, Santa Rosa Press Democrat

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