



The Pioneer Consort

Michael Nix 413.772.0328 mnix@NixWorks.com
P.O Box 400, Greenfield, MA 01302

Chris Devine: Violin, Mandolin
Michael Nix: Banjar, Guitar, Mandolin
Greg Snedeker: Cello

The Pioneer Consort performs composed and improvised chamber music for Violin, Cello, Guitar, Mandolin, and the Banjar--a seven string classical banjo. Their programs explore unique and colorful arrangements of traditional classical repertoire, Argentine Tango, Brazilian Choro, Classical Neapolitan Mandolin music, American Banjo music, jazz, and multi-genre original compositions with works by Haydn, Mozart, Piazzolla, Gershwin, Abreu, Ocarolon, and Nix.

Based in the culturally rich Pioneer Valley of western Massachusetts, the three musicians of the Pioneer Consort bring together years of international concert touring, recording, and composing in many genres.

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The consort is based in the culturally rich Pioneer Valley of western Massachusetts. The three musicians of the Pioneer Consort bring together years of concert touring, recording, and composing in many genres:

Chris Devine is a musician of diverse talents, performing on electric and acoustic violin, mandolin, and guitar, as well as flute, saxophone, and keyboard. He studied with internationally known concert violinist Julian Olevsky. As a session musician he has appeared on over 100 CDs in many different styles of music, including classical, jazz, pop, country, and folk. From 2000 to 2002, Chris toured Europe and Russia as a featured soloist with Blackmore's Night, starring the influential guitarist Ritchie Blackmore of Deep Purple, and also appeared on their gold CD "Fires at Midnight".

Michael Nix has performed traditional classical repertoire, new classical, and original music on guitar, lute, banjo and mandolin, in concert halls throughout the United States and Asia. He has composed solo music, songs, chamber music, symphonic works, electronic music, and opera. Nix designed the seven string Banjar, combining elements of the classical five string banjo, the lute and the classical guitar. He has recorded a solo guitar CD, and a CD of guitar and mandolin music with The Moser/Nix Duo.

Greg Snedeker has been playing cello for thirty years. He received his B.A. from Boston University, his M.M. from UMass at Amherst and is a doctoral candidate in composition at the Hartt School. He has taught electronic music, composition, and theory at the Hartt School and UMass. He has recorded as a cellist and jazz pianist with many local and national artist's CDs including grammy award winning saxophonist Yusef Lateef, and Nashville fiddler Randy Howard. As a composer, he writes in many different styles and his music has been performed across the country and has received various grants and commissions. He currently owns and operates Riverview Productions, a recording/production studio dedicated to acoustic music.

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Performer Bios

Chris Devine: Violin, Mandolin
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Greg Snedeker: Cello

Chris Devine is a musician of diverse talents, performing on electric and acoustic violin, mandolin, and guitar, as well as flute, saxophone, and keyboard. He received his Bachelor of Music degree in violin from the University of Massachusetts in 1984, where he studied with internationally known concert violinist Julian Olevsky. As a session musician he has appeared on over 100 CDs in many different styles of music, including classical, jazz, pop, country, and folk. As a composer, he is a contributor to the Fresh Music Library, an international commercial music supplier and has written the music and lyrics to three musicals sponsored by the Massachusetts Arts Lottery. His compositions and performances have been aired on Nickelodeon, Comedy Central, and PBS. From 2000 to 2002, Chris toured Europe and Russia as a featured soloist with Blackmore's Night, starring the influential guitarist Ritchie Blackmore of Deep Purple, and also appeared on their gold CD "Fires at Midnight". He has also been appearing with The Bobby Darling Show, a Northeast-based music and comedy quartet, since 1989.

Michael Nix has performed traditional classical repertoire, new classical, and original music on guitar, lute, banjo and mandolin, in concert halls throughout the United States and Asia. He has composed solo music, songs, chamber music, symphonic works, electronic music, and opera. Nix designed the seven string Banjar, combining elements of the classical five string banjo, the lute and the classical guitar. His awards and commissions includes a 2002 assignment by The Ann Sorvino Dance Project, for a dance work commemorating the 9-11 tragedy. In 2004, he was resident composer and string master at Shakespeare & Co. in Lenox, MA. Nix was awarded grants to perform "New Music From the Northeast", a program of original music and works by composers from New York and New England. In 1991 he was selected as Massachusetts Music Teacher's Association composer of the year. Nix is currently on the Massachusetts Touring Program, and as a lute and guitar soloist he was on the New Hampshire Touring Program. He was a featured performer for the Connecticut Classical Guitar Society's Andres Segovia outreach program. In the mid 1980's, Nix formed Mythos, a flexible chamber ensemble performing newly composed and older chamber music. Nix wrote the libretto for a children's opera, "Liombruno" with music by Salvatore Macchia, premiered at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in 1989. In 1988, he performed at the Bushnell Hall in Hartford CT, commemorating a 1931 Andres Segovia performance. Nix produced a John Cage memorial theater piece in 1992, incorporating musicians, dancers, visual artists, and improvisational theater.

Greg Snedeker has been playing cello for thirty years. He received his B.A. from Boston University, his M.M. from UMass at Amherst and is a doctoral candidate in composition at the Hartt School. He has taught electronic music, composition, and theory at the Hartt School and UMass. He has recorded as a cellist and jazz pianist with many local and national artist's CDs including grammy award winning saxophonist Yusef Lateef, and Nashville fiddler Randy Howard. As a composer, he writes in many different styles and his music has been performed across the country and has received various grants and commissions. He currently owns and operates Riverview Productions, a recording/production studio dedicated to acoustic music.

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Review Quotes

The Pioneer Consort:

“The First Church of Deerfield thanks you for presenting such a stunning concert....”
Jean Turner, The Brick Church Music Series, Deerfield, MA

Artist Reviews:

Chris Devine:

" thrilling solos and a charming stage presence....."
Berlin Taggespiegel

"...his violinistic jousts with Blackmore were a highlight.... one
crazy fiddler!"
Stockholm Aftonbladet

Michael Nix:

"... breathtakingly beautiful."
Peter Mix, "Acoustic Musician", September 1997.

“Wonderfully warm and inspiring”
Ruth Ehrenberg, Tuesday Morning Music, Springfield, MA

Greg Snedeker:

"It is important to note that in making a technical analysis of Greg Snedeker's compositions,
there is no doubt that he has the ability to transform simple songs or spontaneous themes into
META-ART. "
Yusef Lateef

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Further Information and References

The Brick Church Music Series, First Church of Deerfield, Old Deerfield, MA
Jean Turner: 413-774-2657 jwturner@crocker.com

Old Deerfield Craft Fairs and Pocumtuck Museum Concert Series, Pocumtuck Museum, Old
Deerfield, MA
Tim Neumann: 413-774-7476 tneumann@deerfield.history.museum

Classic Day Festival, Greenfield, MA
Sandy Thomas: 774-6051 x 14 sthomas@nesea.org

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Pioneer Consort Repertoire

New Music

Barton Cove	Michael Nix
Wintersong	Michael Nix
Prayer	Michael Nix
Preludes, Airs and Dances	Michael Nix
Prelude	
Air	
Vals	
Choro	
Gigue	
Donde Esta!	Greg Snedeker

Argentine Tango

El Choclo (c.1905)	A.G. Villoldo
Nostalgias (1935)	Juan Carlos Cobián
La Cumparsita (1916)	G. Rodriguez
Libertango (c.1972)	Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)

Brazilian Choro

Tico Tico	Zequinha Abreu (1880-1935)
Vou Vivendo	Pixinguinha (1897-1973) and Benedito Lacerda (1903-1958)
Não me Toques	Zequinha Abreu

Classical Repertoire

Sonata in D	Christian Gottlieb Scheidler (ca. 1752-1815)
Allegro	
Romanze	
Rondo	
Rondo Alla Turca	W.A. Mozart (1756-1791)
Op. 76, No. 3	Haydn (1732-1809)

Irish Baroque Music

Lord Inchiquin/Carolan's Concerto	Turlough O'Carolan (1670-1738) arr. Nix
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American Banjo Music

Dallas Rag	Dallas String Band (c. 1928)
Summertime	George Gershwin (1898-1937)

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Technical Requirements

Size of Group: Three

Space Requirements: The Pioneer Consort performs a program which requires space for three musicians seated. At times they will use a small guitar amplifier, or a PA system.

Set Up and Rehearsal Requirements:

Space: 8' x 8' set up space at minimum.

Technical:

-Sponsor should provide three (3) chair with flat seats and no arms set at a height of 19" from the floor.

-If PA is provided:

PA: 3 vocal mics , 3 highest quality instrument mics suitable for violin/mandolin, guitar/banjo, cello

-If The Pioneer Consort provides sound reinforcement, one (1) 120 volt 20 amp source at the site will be needed for the sound system.

Lighting:

-General warm to neutral stage lighting, sufficient to read music.

-House up enough for performers to be able to see the audience, with the ability to dim and darken lighting.

Set up time:

-Set up time is 1.5 hours.

-If Sponsor provides PA a sound check of 30 min. will be added to set up time.

-If The Pioneer Consort provides sound reinforcement please allow 1 hour for set up and warm up time. (Shorter set ups are possible for festival and First Night settings if we can work with your tech people ahead of time.)

Sale of Recordings

The Pioneer Consort would like to offer recordings, books and scores, video tapes, and art reproductions for sale at the performances. This will require a small table in a suitable public place-lobby or rear of concert hall. NixWorks can provide the table if necessary.

Dressing Room

- One (1) room must be secure while performers are on stage. Must be within easy access to washroom facilities. Temperature of room should be from 68-72 degrees.

Lodging (Optional)

-Lodging and breakfast may be provided by sponsor at times. Lodging may be in a hotel/motel, or a room provided by the sponsor, with access to a hot shower.

Food and Drink

-Three 12 oz. bottles of bottled spring water, and three cups of hot herbal (non caffeinated) tea should be available in the dressing room.

-(Optional) A light sandwich fare (turkey) should be available before the performance, and a meal provided following the performance.

Tobacco, Drugs, Alcohol

-No smoking tobacco, drugs, or alcohol back stage, or in dressing room in presence of performers before performance, or while performance is in progress. Alcohol may be present at any reception following the performance.