ASHOKAN FAREWELL JAY UNGAR AND MOLLY MASON RETURN TO WISCONSIN UNION THEATER

When a fiddle elicits an Emmy nomination, you know it’s got to be good. Enjoy the musical stylings of duo Jay Ungar and Molly Mason when they bring bluegrass back to Madison on Saturday, April 25, 2015, at 7:30 p.m. in the Frederic March Play Circle at Wisconsin Union Theater. This show is almost sold-out, with only 40 tickets left. Purchase tickets online or call the Box Office at 608-265-ARTS (2787). Tickets can also be purchased at either Vilas Hall (entrance on East Campus Mall, 821 University Avenue) or the box office in the Wisconsin Union Theater. Ticket prices are as follows. General Public: $25; Wisconsin Union Members & Non UW-Madison Students: $21; UW-Madison Faculty & Staff: $23; UW-Madison Student (with ID): $10.
Ungar and Mason’s fused history is captured in their music. A review from by Gottlieb of AllMusic.com states “Times of great and intense joy and love, and also times of horrible anguish and tears, are portrayed and echoed in this musical score and the playing, particularly of Jay's fiddle, and also with Molly's singing. It is…triumphantly moving…at both a very primitive and a very cerebral level.”

A literal marriage of cultural influences—Jay is from the Bronx, Molly from Washington State. He was raised on pop music of the 1940s and ’50s, she had a fondness for traditional fiddle music and ’30s and ’40s popular tunes. He hung out in Greenwich Village coffeehouses and roamed North Carolina and Tennessee in search of traditional players. She played clubs and colleges on the West Coast and took a liking to the jazzy sound of the Swing Era. Since joining forces—both artistically and romantically (the two married in 1991), they have become one of the most celebrated duos on the American acoustic music scene.

From Jay’s world-renowned Ashokan Fiddle & Dance Camps begun in the 80s to a collaboration with Ken Burns for his PBS documentary The Civil War with their unforgettable Emmy-nominated tune Ashokan Farewell, the work of Ungar and Mason is beloved internationally: according to the duo’s website a recording of the piece by Her Majesty’s Royal Marines has remained popular for years.

“[Their music] is a celebration of a simpler and more natural time involving communities that were in touch with the cycles of nature and with each other,” says Gottlieb.

These performances are presented by the Wisconsin Union Theater’s Performing Arts Committee and supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds form the state of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts.