

Kendra Ward & Bob Bence

music from the appalachian tradition – uniting authentic mountain soul with contemporary virtuosity and drive!

“*Old-timey music at its best!*”
– **Folk Artist News**

“*Performers such as Kendra Ward and Bob Bence have inspired a new generation of dedicated dulcimer and traditional music enthusiasts.*”
– **The News, Beaumont, Texas**

There here are some groups that accurately recreate the sounds of the past, and others that blast through the boundaries of tradition, but when it comes to artists that redefine that tradition, uniting authentic mountain soul with contemporary virtuosity and drive, Kendra Ward and Bob Bence stand alone.

Their music has its roots deep in the mountains of Appalachia and it possesses a universal appeal that the duo has shared around the world for the past quarter-century!

Why Kendra and Bob remain among the most important and influential traditional artists on the scene can be summed up in one simple word – audience. Everything they do on stage is aimed at satisfying, stirring and captivating their audience. Whether blazing through fiddle tunes, relating stories from their Appalachian family tradition, or singing an original song with an authenticity that few can match, a Kendra Ward and Bob Bence performance is always a singular delight, like good friends gathered on the front porch. Whether in a coffeehouse, school, concert hall or festival, audiences recognize this from the moment Kendra and Bob hit the stage, and they reward it the best way they know how. They come to see Kendra Ward and Bob Bence again and again. And again!

(continued on reverse)



Workshops, Master Classes and Residency Activities

Kendra Ward and Bob Bence present workshops and master classes on a variety of musical instruments including hammered dulcimer, mountain dulcimer and guitar. They also offer workshops on group arrangements, jamming, music business, and a variety of other topics.

For schools, Kendra Ward and Bob Bence can present educational performances designed for both small groups and large assemblies.

Longer term residency programs are also available.


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Authenticity can't be taught, so it's really no surprise that **Kendra Ward** has emerged as one of our most respected Appalachian musicians. Her background is virtually unique among today's generation of performers. She grew up immersed in the traditions and sounds of the past, literally basking in the old tunes and songs her father and grandmother played. Today Kendra is recognized as one of the most creative and technically gifted hammered dulcimer players in the world of Appalachian and acoustic music. She is also one of just a handful of contemporary mountain dulcimer virtuosos who play in the traditional style.

Kendra's unique upbringing has left her with a powerful link to her Appalachian roots. The late Derrick Bell, of the Grammy award-winning "Chieftains" recognized this when he wrote from his home in Ireland to tell Kendra that he loved her *Way Down Yonder* CD. He remarked that the original tunes sounded so authentic that he had assumed they were traditional!

Kendra's music may be rooted in the traditions of the past, but she strives to carry it into the future. She is committed to sharing her cultural inheritance with audiences of all ages - whether it is a 4th grader who wants to know, "how do you play that thing?" or an 85-year old, with a tear in her eye, who says, "I haven't heard that since my dad played it 70 years ago!"

Bob Bence may be one of the most distinctive and original guitar players in Appalachian and acoustic music today, but he began his performing career doing stand-up and improvisational sketch comedy! Guitar playing was "just for fun" back in those days. However, after hearing Kendra play, Bob was completely captivated, both by Kendra, and her amazing hammered dulcimer playing! Before he knew it, Bob had put his comedy career on the shelf, and made making music his new full time gig. These days, Bob's offbeat sense of humour is on display at the many "Emcee-ing" jobs he gets, and during his concert appearances with Kendra.

Together, Kendra and Bob have earned a reputation as one of the most entertaining and accomplished traditional music duos in the nation. They have appeared on stage with The Statler Brothers, Debbie Reynolds, Bill Monroe, Allison Kraus, John Hartford, Sam Bush, and a host of other top performers. They have toured the

United States from coast to coast, and are international favourites throughout England, Scotland and Wales. Whether on stage, on record, or in print, few artists communicate with the honesty, wit, charm and talent of **Kendra Ward and Bob Bence**.

Discography:

- *Crooked and Steep* (2007)
- *High Plains Rain* (2000)
- *Dulcimer Country* (1996)
- *Some Glad Morning* (1994)
- *Hammered Dulcimer Special* (1992)
- *Hammered Dulcimer Christmas Sampler* (1992)
- *Down Yonder* (1990)
- *A Rose Between Two Thorns* (1988)
- *Beyond Bluegrass* (1984)
- *Hammered Dulcimer ... Bluegrass Style* (1983)

Books & Publications:

- *Let's Jam! Volume 3 – The Gospel Edition* (2007)
- *Guitar Cheat Sheet* (2006)
- *Let's Jam! Volume 2* (2006)
- *Let's Jam!* (2002)
- *Hammered Dulcimer Cheat Sheet* (2001)
- *Mountain Dulcimer Cheat Sheet (D-A-A Tuning)* (2001)
- *Mountain Dulcimer Cheat Sheet (D-A-D Tuning)* (2001)
- *The Dulcimer Times* magazine (1998 - 2001)
- *We Wish You A Merry Christmas* (1992)
- *That Old-Time Religion* (1990)
- *The Hammered Dulcimer Handbook, Book 1* (1988)

Instruction Videos & DVD:

- *Learn "West Fork Gals!"* (2007)
- *Mountain Dulcimer Basics* (1999)
- *Playing With Arpeggios* (1998)
- *Hammered Dulcimer Basics* (1998)-

Awards & Distinctions:

- Selected to Ohio Arts Council's *Touring Artist Roster*. (2001 - Present)
- *The Videographer Award of Excellence – Mountain Dulcimer Basics* video. (2000)
- *The Videographer Award of Excellence – Playing With Arpeggios* video. (1999)
- *The Videographer Award of Excellence – Hammered Dulcimer Basics* video. (1998)
- *The Communicator Crystal Award of Excellence – The Dulcimer Times* magazine. (1998)
- *Ohio State Hammered Dulcimer Champion* (1981 and 1983)