



## **A Most Influential Man**

***BCMFest 2012 includes a salute to groundbreaking singer/guitarist Nic Jones***

Nic Jones' career was relatively short, but his impact on folk and traditional music has proved an enduring one -- and that legacy will be celebrated at the 2012 BCMFest.

The duo of Nic Gareiss and Bill Wiegandt will lead a showcase of songs made popular by Jones, one of the most popular singers to come out of the 1960s-70s English folk revival. Jones released a set of landmark albums during the 1970s and early 1980s -- including "The Noah's Ark Trap" and "Penguin Eggs" -- that showcased his distinctive guitar style and his idiosyncratic yet expressive singing, as well as his penchant for reviving obscure or overlooked songs from the British Isle folk music tradition. However, Jones was forced to abandon his musical career after suffering extensive injuries in a 1982 car accident.

Gareiss and Wiegandt are among many musicians who, while not even born when Jones was in his hey-day, nonetheless have a great appreciation for the music he left behind him.

"I see Nic Jones' work as crucial to understanding where the trans-Atlantic folk revival -- and I would argue, revitalization -- stands today," says Gareiss. "Jones' songs,

particularly his harmonization, guitar parts, and innovative accompaniment approach, have influenced countless folk singers, perhaps the most notable of this generation being Kate Rusby. In turn, these younger folk artists have set the bar for the standard and aesthetic of traditional English, and by extension in these post-global times, Irish, Scottish and American folk.”

Gareiss, whose innovative, traditionally rooted stepdancing and “foot percussion” has been a welcome presence at BCMFest and many other Boston-area music events, is also a talented singer and musician. He and Wiegandt, a vocalist and guitarist who draws on popular and contemporary as well as traditional styles, have performed as part of the bands Freshwater and the Heartland String Project.

Among the other performers joining Gareiss and Wiegandt will be Laura Cortese (fiddle, vocals), Jefferson Hamer (guitar, vocals), and Lissa Schneckenburger (fiddle, vocals).

Putting together a Nic Jones tribute, says Gareiss, “allows us a look as the specific ways this artist has had an impact on the next generation of folk practitioners. For me personally, I see Jones' songs of parting, like ‘Master Kilby,’ ‘Ten Thousand Miles’ and ‘Canadee-i-o’ as particularly moving and exemplary of Jones' compelling delivery and incredible guitar work. His musicianship and interpretation have somehow succeeded in proving the relevance of this musical tradition and I, for one, feel very glad and very liberated by it, in the application of that same philosophy to traditional songs I want to perform.”

The BCMFest Nic Jones tribute will take place on Saturday, January 7, at 11:30 a.m. in Club Passim.