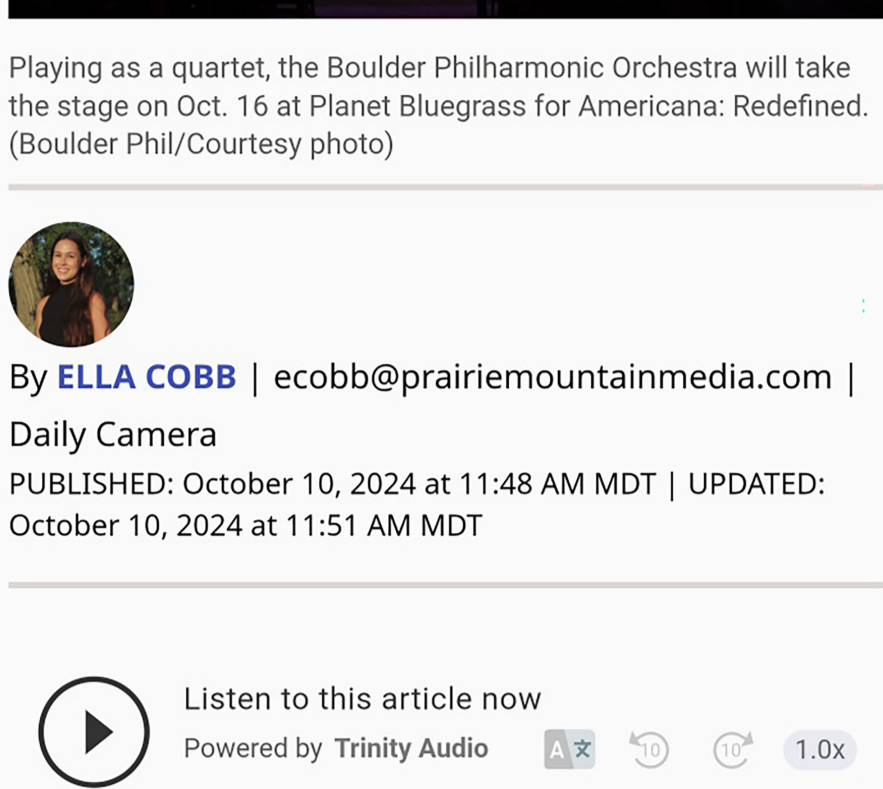
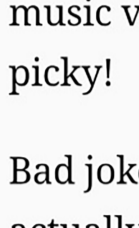


THINGS TO DO > ENTERTAINMENT

## Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra's SHIFT series brings a new tune to Planet Bluegrass



Playing as a quartet, the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra will take the stage on Oct. 16 at Planet Bluegrass for Americana: Redefined. (Boulder Phil/Courtesy photo)



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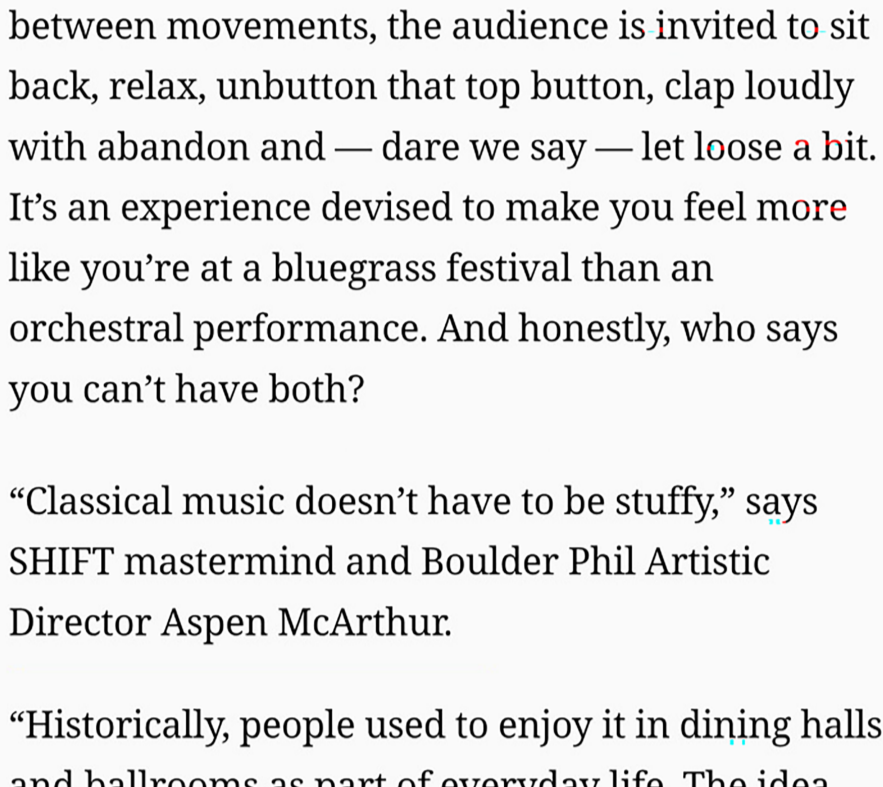
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What do you get when you cross an acclaimed philharmonic orchestra with an iconic bluegrass music venue? You get a symphony that's rather picky!

Bad jokes aside, when you combine the two, you actually get the upcoming Americana: Redefined concert on Oct. 16, where the Boulder Philharmonic will be trading in their formal wear for something a little more relaxed when they take the stage at Planet Bluegrass in Lyons.



Playing as a quartet, the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra will take the stage on Oct. 16 at Planet Bluegrass for Americana: Redefined. (Boulder Phil/Courtesy photo)

The concert, which is the latest installment of Boulder Phil's groundbreaking SHIFT series, is sure to be anything but your standard chamber music recital. Instead of sitting quietly in a pair of uncomfortably tight trousers and politely clapping between movements, the audience is invited to sit back, relax, unbutton that top button, clap loudly with abandon and — dare we say — let loose a bit. It's an experience devised to make you feel more like you're at a bluegrass festival than an orchestral performance. And honestly, who says you can't have both?

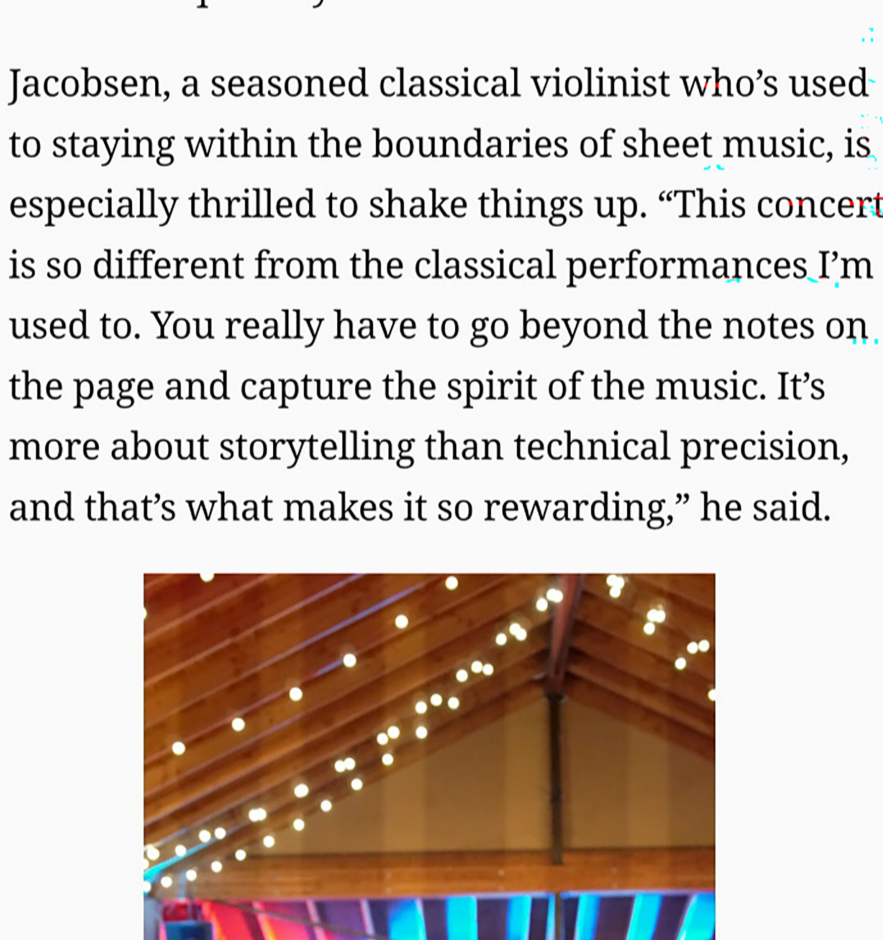
"Classical music doesn't have to be stuffy," says SHIFT mastermind and Boulder Phil Artistic Director Aspen McArthur.

"Historically, people used to enjoy it in dining halls and ballrooms as part of everyday life. The idea that you have to sit still and be quiet isn't how this music was meant to be experienced. SHIFT is all about creating that welcoming, interactive vibe where people feel free to move, dance, and engage with the music."



Boulder Philharmonic violinists Hilary Castle-Green and Ryan Jacobsen performing on Sept. 24, 2024 at Wildflower Pavilion. (Boulder Philharmonic/Courtesy photo)

When it comes to engaging with the audience, Planet Bluegrass—famed for throwing legendary musical shindigs at its Wildflower Pavilion in Lyons, such as RockyGrass Festival and Rocky Mountain Folks Festival, is just the place to make it happen. The heart of Planet Bluegrass is the Wildflower Pavilion, a rustic wooden structure that encourages a cozy and laid-back vibe.



Boulder Philharmonic violinists Hilary Castle-Green and Ryan Jacobsen performing on Sept. 24, 2024 at Wildflower Pavilion. (Boulder Phil/Courtesy photo)

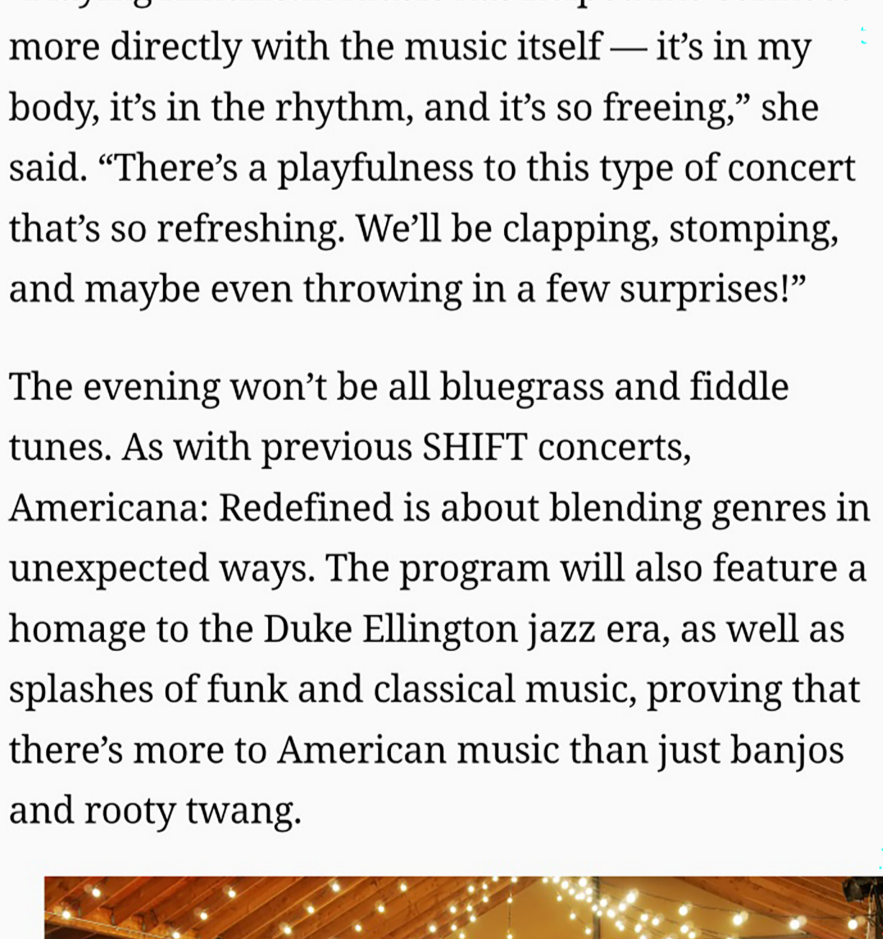
According to Zach Tucker, Vice President of Planet Bluegrass, the venue has a rich tradition of celebrating music in a way that feels more like a community gathering than a concert.

"When the Boulder Phil approached us about collaborating, it was a no-brainer. While bluegrass is our core, we've always wanted to showcase a wider range of music, and this was a fun way to do just that," Tucker said.

However, audiences should not expect a typical classical setlist. As the name suggests, Americana: Redefined will embark on a wild ride through the many flavors of American music, from jazz and bluegrass to some lesser-known gems, like the music of the Métis people, whose culture blends early French and English settlers' traditions with the music of Indigenous communities.

"We're not just sticking to the bluegrass and country tracks," explains Boulder Phil's newly appointed Concertmaster Ryan Jacobsen. "We're diving deep into the diversity of American music, and it's exciting to be presenting these styles in such a unique way."

Jacobsen, a seasoned classical violinist who's used to staying within the boundaries of sheet music, is especially thrilled to shake things up. "This concert is so different from the classical performances I'm used to. You really have to go beyond the notes on the page and capture the spirit of the music. It's more about storytelling than technical precision, and that's what makes it so rewarding," he said.



A young whippersnapper enjoys Boulder Phil's GROOVE concert inside of the Wildflower Pavillion at Planet Bluegrass on Sept. 24, 2024. (Boulder Phil/Courtesy photo)

While the crowd is encouraged to get up and do some dancing at the concert, Jacobsen admits he'll be keeping his own movements more restrained.

"I won't speak for my colleagues, but you'll thank me for not dancing any jigs," he said.

"That aside, there is so much more audience interaction, and the less formal energy gives these shows a relaxed, comfortable feel. We hope people feel comfortable experiencing the show in whatever ways feel right to them, whether that's moving around and chatting, clapping or dancing. And we enjoy speaking to the audience! Some of the tunes might be familiar to people in the crowd, but I've always thought that giving a little context can really help people approach new music," he said.

Violinist Hilary Castle-Green is also excited about the collaboration. Having played alongside Steve Martin (yes, that Steve Martin) in the Broadway musical Bright Star, she's no stranger to Americana music and its unpolished, raw energy.

"Playing American music has helped me connect more directly with the music itself — it's in my body, it's in the rhythm, and it's so freeing," she said. "There's a playfulness to this type of concert that's so refreshing. We'll be clapping, stomping, and maybe even throwing in a few surprises!"

The evening won't be all bluegrass and fiddle tunes. As with previous SHIFT concerts, Americana: Redefined is about blending genres in unexpected ways. The program will also feature a homage to the Duke Ellington jazz era, as well as splashes of funk and classical music, proving that there's more to American music than just banjos and rooty twang.



Folks gather at Wildflower Pavillion on Sept. 24, 2024 to see Boulder Philharmonic perform GROOVE. The venue offers an intimate, rustic setting perfect for toe-tapping. (Boulder Phil/Courtesy photo)

"It's like taking a deep dive into the roots of everything we hear today — connecting the dots between genres in a way that surprises the audience," says McArthur.

Boulder Phil will follow up this concert with Brass and Brews on Nov. 6, an event that pairs brass quintet performances with specially curated drinks from local breweries and distilleries.

"We're taking the 'interactive concert' concept to a whole new level," said McArthur. "What's better than enjoying world-class music with a cocktail in hand?"

Whether you're a seasoned orchestra-goer looking to ditch the formal wear for one night, or a bluegrass fan curious to see what happens when a philharmonic orchestra throws a barn burner, Americana: Redefined at Planet Bluegrass will be a night to remember.

To purchase tickets to Americana: Redefined or to learn more about the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra's SHIFT series, visit <https://boulderphil.org/shift>.