

With a career spanning over two decades, **Hanneke Cassel** has helped redefine what it means to be a modern fiddler. A driving force in the ever-changing landscape of acoustic music, Hanneke blends originality and innovation with the spirit of Scottish traditional fiddle. Fusing musical roots from the Isle of Skye and Cape Breton Island with Americana stylings, Hanneke's playing has been described by the *Boston Globe* as "exuberant and rhythmic, somehow wild and innocent, delivered with captivating melodic clarity and an irresistible playfulness." Beyond the strings of her fiddle, it is Hanneke's hugely generous presence and passion that round out her magnetism as a performer on the world stage of fiddle music.

A native of Port Orford, Oregon, Hanneke found her start in Texas-Fiddling competitions. A two time Junior Scottish Fiddling Champion between 1992 and 1994, Hanneke went on to win the 1997 U.S National Scottish Fiddle Championship. Continuing her journey into the traditions of Scottish fiddle music, Hanneke was embraced by the Scottish Fiddling community, centered around the camps of **Alasdair Fraser**. An original alumna of Fraser's Valley of the Moon Scottish Fiddling School, Hanneke instructs regularly at Alasdair's music camps as well as at the Mike Block String Camp (run by her husband, acclaimed cellist Mike Block), Harald Haugaard's International Fiddle School, West Denmark Fiddle School, and Live Oak Fiddle Camp. Hanneke received her Bachelor's of Music in Violin Performance from Berklee College of Music, where she has since returned to serve as a guest instructor in the American Roots department. Gracing stages across North America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, India and East Asia, Hanneke has established herself as a prolific composer and versatile musician. Hanneke's original material draws gracefully upon her personal experiences with love and loss, weaving together the joys and sorrows of life in times of celebration and hardship. Hanneke's discography includes six unique solo albums that harness her magnificent presence. Melding more traditional fiddle music with her own compositions, Hanneke's arrangements evoke the heart and showcase her talent as both a curator of tradition and an eloquent creator in her own right.

Cassel's latest album *Infinite Brightness* lyrically and poignantly captures a brightness that shines with sorrow-tinted joy. Written on the heels of a global pandemic and in memory of friends who've died in recent years, the nine compositions on this album exude Cassel's trademark energetic playing while carrying the gravitas of loss, grief, and a sense of hope that endures. Co-produced with bandmate **Keith Murphy**, who plays guitar and harmonium on the album, *Infinite Brightness* also features **Jenna Moynihan**, who contributes five-string fiddle, **Tristan Clarridge** on cello, and guitarist **Yann Falquet** (heard on "Dmitri's Dream" and "Last Alleluia").

Hanneke has been a featured performer at Celtic Connections (Scotland), KVMR Celtic Fest, Milwaukee Irish Fest, Celtic Colours (Cape Breton, Canada), WGBH Christmas Celtic Sojourn, and the National Celtic Festival (Port Arlington, Australia). She has been featured on PBS with the fiddle band **Childsplay** and has performed with Baroque/Celtic group Ensemble **Galilei** at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (with former NPR 'Talk of the Nation' host Neal Conan) and the National Geographic in Washington, D.C. (with actor Bill Pullman). Guest appearances include stints with **Cherish the Ladies**, **Matt Glaser & the Wayfaring Strangers**, **Alasdair Fraser & Natalie Haas**, and **Joey McIntyre** (from New Kids on the Block.)

Along with her loyal commitment to *Many Hopes*, Hanneke is an avid supporter of *Up With Music*, a community strings program based in Lawrence, MA. *Up With Music* provides musical training for under-privileged and at risk youth, providing a positive outlet into the music community while building valuable leadership skills. Hanneke enjoys investing her time in opportunities close to home, joining music circles that helped to shape her passion and influential career. She lives with her husband, cellist Mike Block, and their daughter in Somerville, MA.