

World music with a gypsy beat

The Sultans of String tour BC

CAROLYN GRANT
THE VALLEY

If you are a fan of latin, gypsy, folk or middle eastern music — scratch that. If you are a music fan, you will want to mark Friday, January 16 on your calendar and make your way to Centre 64 in Kimberley.

That's the date that the Sultans of String play their only East Kootenay date on their BC tour.

Sultans of String have been called "groundbreaking...virtuoso...boundary pushing... infectious... visionary... brilliant...and absolutely stunning!"

The trio currently all live in Toronto, but have travelled extensively, picking up musical influences as they go.

They are led by six-string violinist and bandleader Chris McKhool, who in a telephone interview with



The Sultans of String play Kimberley next Friday.

the Valley this week, said that if you push Musical Puree on the blender, that's the sound of the Sultans of String.

"I think that we have musical ADD," McKhool said. "For me, and I think for audiences, it's a fun experience to hear all different styles. Think rumba flamenco rhythms, like the Gypsy Kings. But we also enjoy music from all over the world, music that has immigrated to Canada."

Living in Toronto, he says it is not unusual to walk down the street and hear all kinds of world music — from Celtic to African drumming. The Sultans incorporate all that and more into their shows.

Their show is almost entirely instrumental, but each song tells a story, McKhool says.

"Each song tells a little tale and reflects a facet of Canada or the world."

One of the things

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CHRIS MCKHOOL

McKhool enjoys about touring is performing at schools.

"We try to perform school concerts in a lot of the towns we visit. I believe in educational outreach and teaching music."

The group will perform two shows for students at McKim Theatre on Friday, prior to their Centre 64 concert in the evening.

The group flies into Cranbrook next Thursday (and hopes to get in a little skiing before their shows) and then flies to Kelowna.

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In just over a year and a half, Sultans of String have garnered:

- # 1 on national radio charts - "International"/"World"
- National airplay across the CBC, including "Canada Live", "Studio Sparks"
- 2008 Independent Music Awards nomination - Best World Fusion
- 2008 Festivals and Events Ontario- Best Variety Act
- 2008 Indie Awards - Favourite World Group
- 2008 Canadian Independent Music Awards Finalist
- 2007 Canadian Folk Music Award nomination - Best Instrumental Group
- 2007 Ontario Independent Music Awards- Best Song, Best Instrumental
- 2007 Toronto Independent Music Award nomination - World Music Category
- international airplay, including Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Belarus, Colombia, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Spain, The Netherlands, U.S. and the U.K.

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