



Sunday | October 26, 2025 | 3pm
NEC's Jordan Hall

Dreamers' Circus

Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen

violin and other instruments

Nikolaj Busk

accordion, piano, synthesizers

Ale Carr

cittern, kannel, and other instruments

Selections will be announced from the stage.

Today's program will run approximately 90 minutes,
with no intermission.

Additional support provided by
The Colonnade Hotel

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Susan & Michael Thonis

A FEW WORDS FROM DREAMERS' CIRCUS

Hello and welcome to our performance as part of our Fall 2025 series of concerts. We are excited to be back travelling and touring internationally after what has been a challenging time for all of us. It's been a while since we've been in the United States.... What will you, the audience, think of what we play? How will you react? Well, we're about to find out....

Firstly, let us tell you a little about Dreamers' Circus, who we are and what we do.

Our approach to music sees us challenge the norms of the traditional music we were brought up with and attempt to shape it into how we imagine Nordic music can sound in 2025. We certainly do not seek to turn our back on our folk music roots and, having grown up with traditional music, we value it as an important part of our musical make-up. But we also discovered early on that traditional music cannot stay static, that change is inevitable and even, we might argue, beneficial. So, in a sense, we view our roots in the rich traditions of Danish and Swedish folk music as a point of departure and refuse to accept tradition as a straitjacket. We investigate new angles and consciously seek to challenge not just ourselves as performers and composers but also the norms and sometimes even the structures of the music we play. With Dreamers' Circus, no two performances are quite the same and we enjoy the fact that today's show can be quite different from yesterday's. We have learned to enjoy our curiosity about the music and have come to value the importance of listening. Close listening to what we each do is an important part of our engagement with the music and with each other. We hope that you, the audience, might also listen closely and join us as we react to one another's playing and spontaneously respond. Our name hints at the possibilities and magic of the imagination and we hope that you will open yourself up to the colors and images we seek to create with our soundscapes.

Ale, Nikolaj, Rune.

ABOUT DREAMERS' CIRCUS

Fifteen years after first meeting at a jam session in Copenhagen, Dreamers' Circus have emerged as the pre-eminent international band in Nordic folk and traditional music. This talented trio crafts a sound defined by their virtuosic musical abilities across a diverse range of instruments that include fiddle, accordion, piano, and cittern.

Drawing from their backgrounds in traditional and roots music, Dreamers' Circus presents a genre-bending blend of folk sensitivity, jazz improvisation and classical complexity, all infused with influences from popular music. The result is a music that is resolutely contemporary but also rhythmically and melodically engrossing.

Piano and accordion player Nikolaj Busk, rooted in folk music, is highly sought after for his performance and arranging skills in the pop music and jazz realms. Violinist, Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen, while reared in a folk-music loving family, emerged as a prodigious classical player who by his early twenties was leader of the Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra. Swedish-born Ale Carr, also from a folk music lineage, provides rhythmic drive on cittern underpinning the band's overall sound.

Over the course of seven albums, Dreamers' Circus have positioned themselves among Denmark's leading musical ensembles, as evidenced by their appointment by the Danish Arts Foundation as a "Special Ensemble." Their accolades include numerous Danish Music Awards, contributions to TV and film soundtracks, and compositions and commissions for theatre and contemporary dance productions—the most recent being the highly acclaimed Aaben Dans production of *The Lost Musicians*. A busy touring schedule sees the band frequently visit the US and Japan. They tour regularly in Europe and throughout Scandinavia.

The name **Dreamers' Circus** invokes images of the Big Top and suggests magic, playfulness, acrobatic inventiveness, fun, skill, and imagination. In February 2025 they released their latest recording titled *Handed On*.

Dreamers' Circus acknowledges the support of The Danish Arts Foundation.

Dreamers' Circus have issued 7 CDs:

A Little Symphony (2013) released on GoDanish GO0913

Second Movement (2015) released on GoDanish GO0315

Rooftop Sessions (2018) released on Vertical Records VERTCD112

Blue White Gold (2020) released on Vertical Records VERTCD122

Langt ud' i skoven (2022) released on Dacapo Records DRBK2022001

The Lost Swans (2022) released on Vertical Records and GoDanish GO0322

Handed On (2025) released on Vertical Records VERTCD132 and GoDanish GO1424CD

From the Celebrity Series of Boston archives...

As a violinist in the Danish String Quartet, Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen made his Boston debut on the Celebrity Series in November 2013, returned in January 2017, and appeared most recently with that group in January 2023. Originally engaged to perform at NEC's Jordan Hall in October 2020, Celebrity Series was fortunate to be able to present Dreamers' Circus virtually that same season, with a performance memorably recorded at an historic lighthouse in Denmark. As a group, Dreamers' Circus made their in-person debuts in February 2023 and return for their third engagement this evening.



Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen violin and other instruments

Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen (violin and other instruments) is from Roskilde on the outskirts of Copenhagen in Denmark. He started playing violin when he was five years old. In 2001, he founded the Danish String Quartet, which is one of the leading chamber music quartets in Europe. This Grammy-nominated ensemble has won many prizes and awards. Rune's father is from the Faroe Islands that lie in the north Atlantic between the west coast of Norway and Iceland. His own upbringing was in a family that valued traditional music, song, and dance. Before he devoted his life to full-time touring with Dreamers' Circus and the Danish String Quartet, Rune was leader of the Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra while still in his early twenties.

Rune plays a Giovanni Battista Guadagnini violin which is generously loaned to him by the Goof Foundation. His bow is by Eugene Sartory (1910).

Nikolaj Busk accordion, piano, synthesizers

Danish born Nikolaj Busk (accordion, piano, synthesizers) has been a significant figure on the Danish music scene for a number of years now and is in much demand as a composer and music arranger across a number of musical genres. He has won no fewer than 13 Danish Music Awards for his releases and collaborates with various artists. Nikolaj has written music for other ensembles, choirs, orchestras and theater performances.

Nikolaj's accordion is by Pietro Mario.

Ale Carr cittern, kannel, other instruments

Hailing from the southern Swedish region of Skåne, Ale Carr (cittern, kannel, and other instruments) was raised in a family of folk musicians and dancers. His own style incorporates a strongly developed rhythmic drive coupled with a sensitivity that always seeks to serve the music. He is recognized as one of Scandinavia's most talented folk musicians and leading innovators on plucked string instruments. Also a highly respected composer, he was presented with a Danish Music Award as Composer of the Year in 2015. Apart from his work as a member of Dreamers' Circus, he also toured with the folk music group Basco.

Ale plays a Nordic Cittern, designed by the Swedish luthier Christer Ådin. He uses Thomastik-Infeld strings.

Did you enjoy the
performance?
Let us know your thoughts
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