

Sultans of String coming to Claude Church next Sunday

Two-time Juno nominees and SiriusXM Award winners Sultans of String will make a much anticipated return to Claude Parlour Concerts Feb. 28.

They will be releasing their new CD, Subcontinental Drift, featuring sitar master Anwar Khurshid (Oscar winning Life of Pi, Love Guru).

Known for spotlighting treasured special guests from around the world, including The Chieftains' Paddy Moloney on their last CD, Sultans of String are particularly excited about this east-meets-west offering which honours the migrant journey.

“There is something really magical about joining world music rhythms that we often play, but with pop sensibilities and forms and lengths, and blending that with the music of the East,” bandleader/fiddler Chris McKhool said.

Yet, Subcontinental Drift is more than a genre-hopping passport. It is a musical promise that embraces differences while finding common ground across culture, land and time.

Ambassadors of musical diversity, Sultans of String thrill their audiences with their global sound-tapestry of East Coast celtic, Arabic folk, Cuban rhythms, Gypsy-jazz and South Asian styles, celebrating musical fusion and human creativity with warmth and virtuosity. Fiery violin dances with kinetic guitar, while the rhythm section lays down unstoppable grooves. Throughout, acoustic strings meet electronic wizardry to create layers and depth of sound.

Since forming eight years ago, Sultans of String have been on an impressive trajectory with an astonishing number of awards and accolades in tow, including two Juno nominations, two Canadian Folk Music Awards, and first place in the ISC (out of 15,000 entries).

The band is led by six-string violinist McKhool (who's played with Jesse Cook and Pavlo), a Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal recipient who grew up in a Lebanese-Egyptian house (Makhoul) bursting with music and diversity. Growing up, McKhool was fed a steady diet of delicious musicality alongside Middle Eastern cuisine and violin lessons. At the core of the band's sound is his bold and fiery fiddle, melded seamlessly with founding guitarist Kevin Laliberté's (Jesse Cook) rumba rhythm, together their musical synergy created Sultans of String's signature sound – the intimate and playful relationship between violin and guitar.

“Over the decades, I've worked with numerous top-10 and No. 1 Billboard artists,” the band's U.S. manager and acclaimed promoter David Wilkes (Bela Fleck, Emmylou Harris, Jerry Jeff Walker) stated. “In all that time, I have not worked with composers more talented than Chris McKhool and Kevin Laliberté from Sultans of String. Not only are they a superb writing team, they are also amazing arrangers and musicians. Fusing the virtuosic talent of Anwar Khurshid adds to their truly global and mesmerizing sound!” The band has a non-stop tour schedule in support of Subcontinental Drift.

The Feb. 28 concert will start at 7:30 p.m.

Claude Presbyterian Church is at 15175 Hurontario St., south of Olde Base Line Road.

Tickets are \$25, or \$20 in advance. got to www.ticketscene.ca/events/13337/ for more information.