

# Dennis Stroughmatt + L'Esprit Creole

French Creole Music from Illinois Country

Evanston In-School Music Association  
Concerts for Kids  
November 2015 concerts



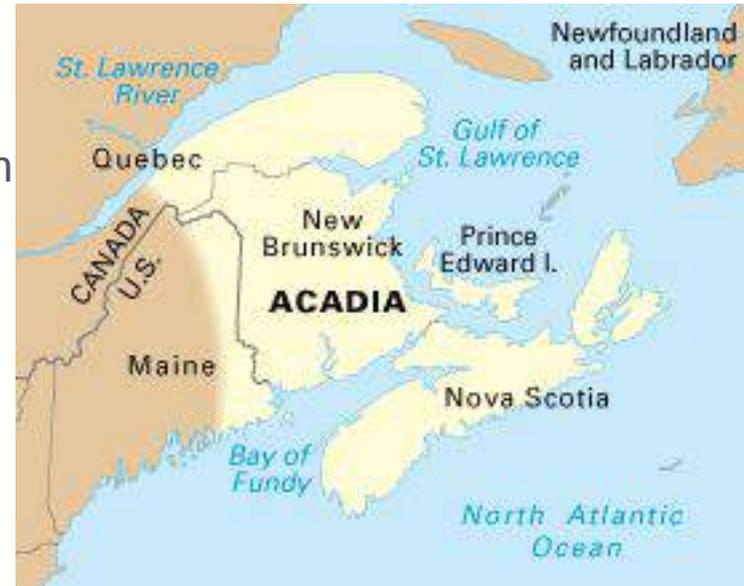
# Facts about French Creole music

- mixture of 3 sources of music: **Celtic** (Ireland), **Canadian**, and **Old Time** (folk music of Southern Appalachia) music
- some songs Dennis plays date back as many as 800 years
- not the same as Cajun music:

**Creole:** think New Orleans    **Cajun:** think Acadian

- however, Creole and Cajun share *bouillon* tradition

*bouillon*=house party



# History of French Creole music

--Illinois roots: French creoles founded Illinois over three hundred years ago.

--around 1710, the French moved from Louisiana to

“Upper Louisiana” (now Illinois and Missouri)

--music traveled up the Mississippi river

--Creole music also found its way to Memphis

and Saint Louis, two cities now rich in

musical traditions



# History of Creole music continued

-1900-French language prohibited in some Illinois and Missouri schools

-loss of culture

-Dennis Stroughmatt and L'Esprit Creole fill the gap!

-Dennis himself is a French Midwest Creole



# What does French Creole music sound like?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfZbjysivbE#action=share>

Boyer Stomp-Dennis Stroughmatt and L'Esprit de Creole

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbHvleaij0U>

Le beau mardi gras

(Did you hear a little of “Skip to My Lou” in that one?)



# Creole language

-many different types-Haitian, Antillean, Louisiana

-why? Because of French colonization

-many types spoken and not written down

Some Louisiana Creole phrases:

Hello-Bounjou

Do you speak Creole?-To pal kreyol?

I'm thirsty-Mo swaf

What time is it?-Ki le li ye?

# Creole language

Here are numbers 1-10 in Louisiana Creole and French:

number	Louisiana Creole	French
1	un	un
2	dé	deux
3	tro	trois
4	kat	quatre
5	cink	cinc

# Instruments

Triangle→



acoustic  
guitar→



fiddle→



harmonica →



# More instruments

upright bass →



voice →



# Official Program



presents

## Dennis Stroughmatt et L'Esprit Creole

*Concerts for Kids*

Evanston/Skokic Elementary & Middle Schools

November 2015



### Program

Performers: Dennis Stroughmatt (fiddle & vocals),  
Jim Willgoose (upright bass & vocals), and Doug Hawf (guitar & vocals)

- |                         |                                |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Au Bois Mesdames     | 7. Tout Tout                   |
| 2. Old Man Lachance     | 8. Chevalier de la Table Ronde |
| 3. Grandmere se Plainte | 9. Valse Miniat                |
| 4. Touches a des Dames  | 10. Grand Mallet               |
| 5. D'ou Viens Tu        | 11. Robert's Reel              |
| 6. Jury Baker           | 12. Le Beau Mardi Gras         |

### Program Notes

Fingers and bow flying, Dennis Stroughmatt takes listeners on a musical odyssey not so different from his own musical journeys into Upper Louisiana Creole culture. Taught to play fiddle by local Creole fiddlers living along the Mississippi River near St. Louis, Dennis is now the authority on this regional pocket of American antiquity. A vibrant blend of Celtic, Canadian and Old Time sounds, this unique music bridges gaps between contemporary Canadian and Louisiana Cajun styles. Preserved by families in the Ozark foothills, the music remains largely intact and true to the traditions that have been passed down over three centuries.

Dennis performs with Jim Willgoose, a long-time musician with a PhD in philosophy and former touring member of the band NRBQ. Jim currently teaches at the Kaskaskia Community College in Centralia, IL. Doug Hawf, from southeastern Illinois near the Wabash River, runs his music store and teaches music. He performs with his family bluegrass band as well as with the Vincennes University string ensemble.

# References

Dennis Stroughmatt et L'Esprit Creole

<http://artistsofnote.com//?s=l%27esprit+creole&x=0&y=0>

Dennis Stroughmatt et L'Esprit Creole

<http://creolefiddle.com/creolefiddle.com/Home.html>

Library of Congress Webcasts: Dennis Stroughmatt and L'Esprit Creole

[http://www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/feature\\_wdesc.php?rec=5739](http://www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/feature_wdesc.php?rec=5739)