

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER

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CHRIS VALLILLO TO PERFORM HISTORICAL MUSIC IN FREE CONCERT AT OLD SCHOOL HOUSE JULY 22

JULY 14, 2017 -- Singer/songwriter Chris Vallillo will perform a free afternoon concert of American Roots Music on Saturday, July 22, starting at 2 p.m. in the Back-In-Time Garden behind the Old School House, 130 Center St. in Douglas. This special performance is hosted by Saugatuck-Douglas History Center as part of this year's Old School House 150th Anniversary celebration, with funding in part by Michigan Humanities Council, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Vallillo, a self-described “roots musician”, makes the people and places of “unmetropolitan” America come to life in song. Having roamed and listened to the rural Midwest for some thirty years, he echoes the land’s indigenous music using six-string and bottleneck slide guitars and harmonica, weaving original, contemporary, and traditional songs and narratives into a compelling and entertaining portrait of the history and lifestyles of the Midwest.

Since many of the traditional pieces Chris performs are songs he collected himself from the last pre-radio generation in rural Illinois, he brings a rare authenticity to his performances. In music ranging from the first pioneers through the era of steamboats, trains and early radio, today's audiences see and hear the music performed on period instruments as it was a century or more ago.

Most recent among his long list of credits stretching back to 1986, he arranged and recorded the music for the nationally syndicated 2016 radio show *Lincoln in Music and Words* for the WFMT Fine Arts Network, and in 2015, created the show *Oh Freedom! Songs of the Civil Rights Movement* and scored the music for the *Illinois Freedom Project* on slavery in Illinois, for the National Park Service.

“Chris’ music invokes the spirit of the Midwest as it was in the days when our Old School House was young,” says SDHC Executive Director Nathan Nietering, “so we felt that bringing his performance here for our anniversary offers another great way to let our community enjoy



reconnecting with the origins of this historically significant structure.”

Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or a blanket; if weather fails to cooperate, the performance will move into the Old School House.

For more information about the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center, its Museum in Saugatuck and Old School House in Douglas, or its activities planned for 2017, visit www.MySDHistory.org.

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