

MAPLE  
&  
MORRIS  
OFFSPRING

PRESENT

# rootbound

Celebrating the life of English folk dance in North America



With Ian Robb, Amelia Mason, Eric McDonald, & Emily Troll  
Original lyrics by Susan Cooper



Maple Morris  
&  
Morris Offspring  
Present

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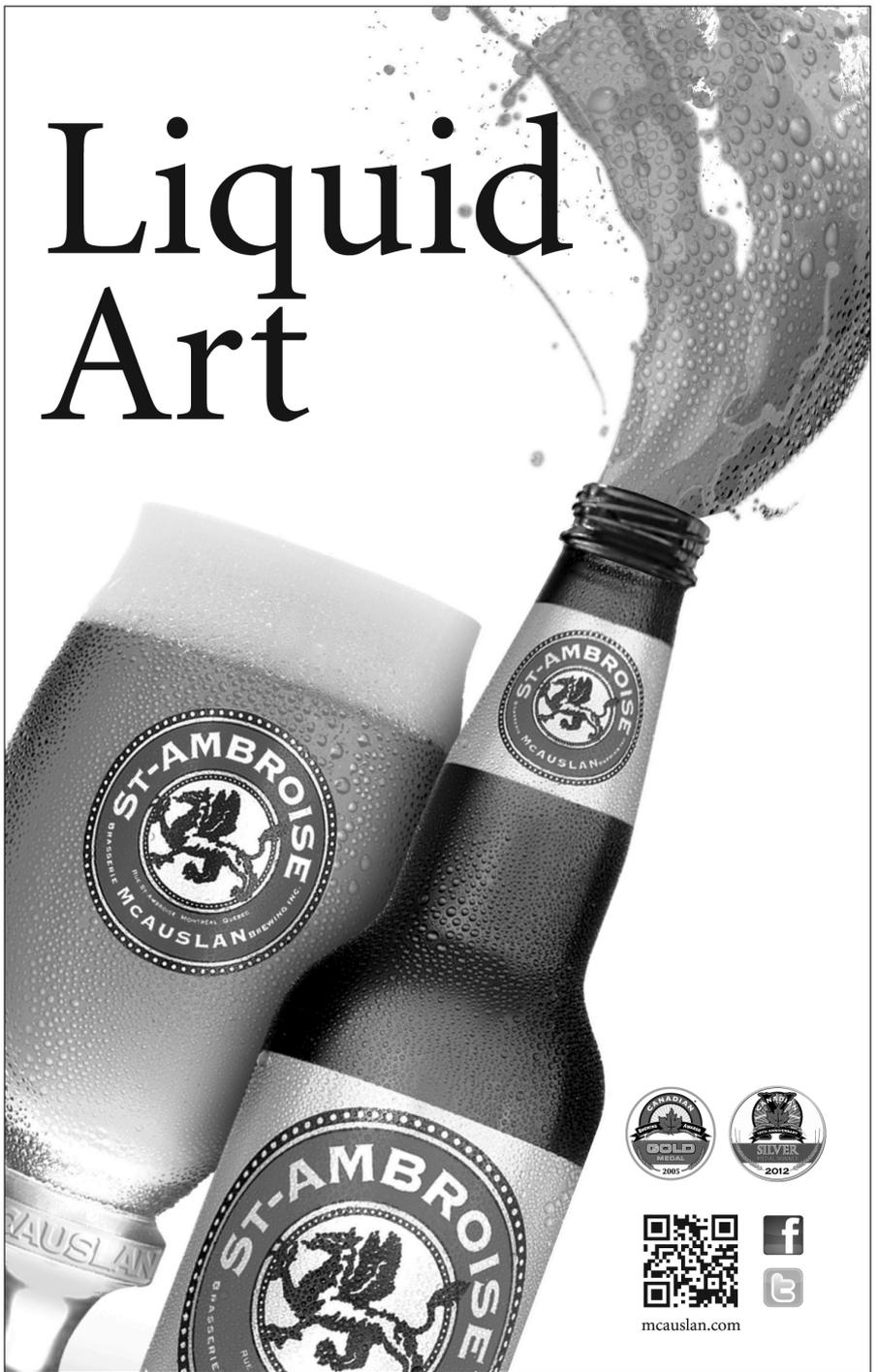
With music by Ian Robb, Amelia Mason, Eric  
McDonald, & Emily Troll

Original Lyrics by Susan Cooper

July 19, 2013, The Berkeley Church, Toronto

Supported in part by  
The New England Folk Festival Association  
Country Dance Society Boston Centre  
Country Dance & Song Society  
McAuslan Brewing

# Liquid Art



mcauslan.com

# ABOUT the SHOW

## Morris Dancing

Morris is a surviving English traditional folk dance that has been performed since the 1400s and has been associated with seasonal and harvest rituals. The dance is vigorous and athletic and the high leaps are accented by the use of white handkerchiefs, sticks, and bells.

## Maple Morris

What started as a simple weekend in Canada for younger dancers has grown into a unique and multifaceted collective with members from various corners of Canada, the US, and the UK. Maple Morris is a community of young Morris dancers born mostly during and after the 1970s North American Morris revival. They are committed to promoting creativity, leadership, and continued excellence in this second generation of Morris music and dance.

[www.maplemorris.com](http://www.maplemorris.com)

## Morris Offspring

The majority of the members of Morris Offspring are sons or daughters of dancers who were involved in the folk revival of the 1970's, the next generation of the next generation if you like. All members hail from Morris teams across the UK, bringing influences from those traditions to dances masterminded by Laurel Swift. The dances she devises with Offspring take stepping, figures and music from the traditions we know and love to produce a new version of the form for the stage. With deep respect for the roots from which Morris came, Morris Offspring is a continuation of this evolving tradition.

[www.morrisoffspring.org.uk](http://www.morrisoffspring.org.uk)

## The Great Morris Exchange: 2 Teams, 3 Years, 3 Countries!

In 2011, Maple traveled to the UK to collaborate Morris Offspring. The result was the production *Must Come Down*, a stage performance showcasing Morris dancing at its most inventive.

Today's show *Rootbound*, is the culmination of the second leg of this collaboration. Part of a two-city tour with Morris Offspring joining Maple Morris on stage, the show also features music by Ian Robb, Amelia Mason, Eric McDonald, and Emily Troll, words from acclaimed author Susan Cooper, and new Morris dance creations by Maple Morris and Morris Offspring.



We've been dancing down the ages, the old world to the new,  
And year by year and day by day the dance brings us to you;  
For it binds us all together, and it shows us all the way  
To celebrate the life we love and drive the dark away.

And the fool will teach the wise man the things he does not know,  
And the child shall watch and the child shall learn the way that she must go.

And the fool will teach the wise man the things he does not know,  
And the child shall watch and the child shall learn the way that she must go,  
To dance and sing as the days pass, through happiness and pain,  
For the sweetest song is the dance of life that will not come again.  
So hear the words that the fool sang, as a gift the child may use:  
Now is the time to learn to dance the steps of the life you choose.

The roots go deep where the tree stands, and they bind it to the ground  
To hold it safe in ice and snow until the year turns round,  
But new green leaves come bounding up and springtime sets them free,  
So year by year it's their rebirth brings new life to the tree.  
We are dancing down the ages, to greet tomorrow's day,  
And the fool has taught the wise men a child will show the way.

And the dance of life goes on and on, and a child will show the way...

© *Susan Cooper*



# rootbound

Celebrating the Life of English folk dance in North America

## ACT I

During a Morris Ale, a Child discovers the dancers.  
She finds her way into the dance by way of a Fool.

*There will be a 15-minute intermission.*

## ACT II

The Child is eager to make the dance her own,  
but finds it more challenging than she expected.  
The Fool helps her create the tradition of Morris anew.

*Stay to have a drink and meet the dancers after show!*

---

### **Dances written by Maple Morris**

Maple Morris' dances were written by dancers at Maple Morris events, often beginning with a kernel or vision from one member, but always with contributions from all dancers past and present. They are written both in existing traditions and adapted traditions.

### **Dances written by Morris Offspring**

Morris Offspring's dances were written by Laurel Swift except Elves, which was written by Ben Moss. All members of the team (past and present) contributed ideas and details to the dances, just like in a real tradition! The dances are not to be performed without permission of Laurel Swift and Morris Offspring.

# THE CAST

## Maple Morris

Chrisiant Bracken	Erica Morse
Emily Breck	Mel Novner
Aidin Carey	Sarah Pilzer
Libby Chamberlin	Stefan Read
Moira Flanagan	Erika Roderick
Kristin Fleischmann-Rose	Emma Schneider
Liora Goldensher	Gemma Smith
Elliot Isen	Natty Smith
Alice Kaufman	Gillian Stewart
Peter Kruskal	Scott Tribble
Hannah Lindner-Finlay	Gus Voorhees
Amelia Mason	Margaret Youngberg
Justin Morrison	

## Morris Offspring

Rhys Boorman	Alun Pinder
James Cook	Nancy Potts
Alex Cumming	Dave Steptoe
Lisa Heywood	Laurel Swift
Jack Honeysett	Crispin Walker
Ben Moss	

## The Characters

The Fool.....	James Cook ( <i>understudy Ben Moss</i> )
The Child.....	Emma Schneider ( <i>understudy Erika Roderick</i> )

## The Band

Jo Maher.....	Oboe
Amelia Mason.....	Band leader, fiddle
Eric McDonald.....	Guitar, mandolin
Ian Robb.....	Vocals, concertina
Emily Troll.....	Accordion

# **P R O D U C T I O N**

## **Central Committee**

Hannah Lindner-Finlay  
Justin Morrison  
Stefan Read  
Natty Smith  
Gillian Stewart

## **Artistic Committee**

Alice Kaufman  
Sylvie Lam  
Justin Morrison  
Erica Morse  
Sarah Pilzer

## **Financial Committee**

Julia Friend  
Hannah Lindner-Finlay  
Sarah Pilzer

## **Logistics**

Justin Morrison  
Stefan Read  
Gillian Stewart

## **Music Committee**

Amelia Mason  
Stefan Read

## **Lyrics**

Susan Cooper

## **Costumes**

Marissa Roque

## **Masks**

Eden Bachelder

## **Poster Artwork**

Peter Klosky



## BRINGING OUR ROOTS TO THE STAGE

Sometimes the title felt like the hardest part. There were days where we sat together in silent consideration, except for the occasional title suggestion which was immediately rejected by everyone else. We found ourselves with a list of what felt like a hundred names, words we thought were attractive, themes we wanted to touch on, and assorted silliness (considered at one point was “Lord Jumpington’s Transatlantic Morris Dancetacular”).

The name we chose wasn’t on that list. As these things sometimes go, it arrived a day before we had to make the decision. We liked the several meanings it invoked: that we are bound to our roots; that we are leaping upwards from them; that we are bound for a place where we can still feel them anchoring us. And then there’s the literal meaning of the word: when a plant is rootbound, it has grown so deep and strong under the soil that it must be transplanted to new earth, so that its roots may grow deeper and the plant stretch higher.

More than anything else, Maple Morris has been about passing the tradition of Morris dance from one person to another. From the first weekend in Montreal in 2005, our idea was that we

could get together with our peers in the dance world, trading dances, swapping songs, and sharing our own experiences in the world of Morris.

We often talk about Maple as a “second-generation” team, which for most of us means quite literally that we have received the tradition from our parents, that we have grown up never having known it not to exist. From the genesis of this project, we knew that we wanted to do a show that could acknowledge Morris as a North American tradition, to thank the teams we learned from and the people who inspired us, and to meditate on what we might have to offer the next generation of dancers.

So, like Maple, *Rootbound* is about passing knowledge onwards. You will see a wise Fool, rooted in the earth but burning with creation. And you will see a Child, ebullient with curiosity, ready to discover this world and eager to make it her own.

The name might have been hard at first, but many things were not. We knew that we wanted to say to our communities in New England and Canada that we feel our roots every time we dance. We knew that we didn’t want ourselves elevated up on a stage, removed from the audience; we wanted to stage with the audience around us and close to us, where we could interact with them more like traditional street dancing.

This show will mark the end of the once-in-a-lifetime Maple/Offspring collaborative project that Stefan Read, Laurel Swift and I conceived at Pinewoods in 2009. I can’t imagine that the creatively restless members of these two teams will go very long before embarking on something we haven’t even thought of yet. Whatever it is, it will be inspired by the deep roots of tradition with which we have had the privilege of growing up.

Justin Morrison  
Artistic Director





## CROSSING THE ATLANTIC

Just like Cecil Sharp, I first saw Morris dancing in Oxfordshire; in my case, it was an early May Morning in Oxford, with the bells jingling over Magdalen Bridge, and I was 18 years old. Some 20 years later I saw it again, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and was just as enchanted. The Pinewoods Morris Men were performing in a Spring Revels at MIT's Kresge Auditorium, and pretty soon - since I then found myself the Revels writer for the next two decades - their dances became very familiar indeed.

So *Rootbound*, with the Morris danced by English and American teams together, provides one of those happy circles that life offers, once in a while. Two years ago Maple Morris crossed the Atlantic to join Offspring in the joint program *Must Come Down*; now Offspring return the compliment. And that long-ago 18-year-old Oxford undergraduate, now very senior, has the good fortune to write a lyric for their show.

We all need ritual; the need is part of our DNA, in a world ruled by the inescapable cycles of day and night, birth and death, spring and winter. So traditions evolve in every culture - unless they're deliberately co-opted or repressed. The first Brits to come to America didn't bring any of their land's flourishing

folk traditions with them. Being Puritans, they didn't even bring Christmas. But you can't dictate culture; folksong and dance crept in after them, in the memories of gentler immigrants. Collecting folk material in Appalachia in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Cecil Sharp and Maud Karpeles even found songs that no longer survived in the British Isles.

The Morris had come too; on both sides of the Atlantic its muscular rhythmic patterns flourished in the folk revivals born around 1910 and 1960. And on both sides it's been changing ever since, breaking out of traditional limitations – notably the one that says it should be danced only by men. This is called evolution. The need for change is part of our DNA too.

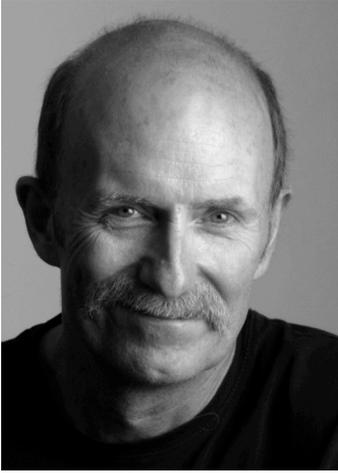
Whatever the misty pre-medieval beginnings of Morris dancing may be, its exuberance is emblematic of spring, bursting out of the shackles of winter, flowering into summer rebirth. And even though a tradition is born out of repetition, it has to remain flexible or it will dry up and die. The roots feed the green leaves; the new shoots grow; the tree changes shape. But it's still a tree, living, flowering, setting seed.

A lot of today's innovative Maple Morris dancers grew up in families that danced, or sang, or shared remembered traditions. The children in today's audience are tomorrow's dancers, perhaps – and their children after them. However digitally sophisticated their world may become, they'll go on responding to that primal delight in release from long dark nights, in communal celebration. We all need the patterns of ritual. It goes with the territory, if you live on Earth.

Susan Cooper  
Lyricist



## COLLABORATING ARTISTS



**Ian Robb** is, as he puts it, “a singer and occasional writer of old songs.” The England-born singer, concertina player, Morris dancer and traditional music advocate has lived 43 years in Canada, and for the last 22 of those has been one third of the internationally acclaimed vocal harmony trio, “Finest Kind”. He is also a charter member of Toronto’s venerable and outrageous folk mob, “The Friends of Fiddler’s Green”, now in its 42nd year.

Ian’s roots are in the English folk club scene of the 1960s, where he found the ability to project his voice across a smoky bar, and developed a love for the old songs of that country and for “new songs that sound old”. Ian has also been an active member of Thames Valley Morris (now “Thames Valley International”) since the 1980s. [www.ianrobb.com](http://www.ianrobb.com)



**Amelia Mason** is a New England native descended from a long line of Morris dancers and troublemakers. Schooled in a variety of Celtic and American styles, she has developed a highly rhythmic and thoroughly original flavor of New England fiddling. Her favorite Morris tradition is Ducklington.



**Emily Troll** has been playing fiddle and accordion at contra dances for over a decade, inspiring dancers to kick up their heels and whoop and holler. A self-proclaimed “texture monster,” she enjoys collaborating, improvising and building new sounds. Her favorite Morris tradition is watching.



**Eric McDonald** is one of Boston's premier acoustic performers and instructors. Born and raised in the area, he grew up steeped in Beantown's vibrant music scene. He has studied with some of the nation's best players, including local sideman Sean Staples and mandolin phenom Joe Walsh. Eric studied at Berklee College of Music under the tutelage of John McGann, Eugene Friesen and many other world class musicians. Eric is now building a reputation for being a fine instructor himself, teaching workshops and lessons privately, at camps during the summer and at the Passim School of Music in Cambridge. Known for his tasteful approach and quick ear, Eric continues to bring his music to new places, most recently overseas to England and Scotland.  
[www.ericmcdonaldmusic.com](http://www.ericmcdonaldmusic.com)



**Susan Cooper** wrote verse and plays for the Revels for 20 years, and later a book about its founder John Langstaff called *The Magic Maker*. Among her novels and screenplays, the best known is the classic fantasy sequence *The Dark Is Rising*.  
[www.thelostland.com](http://www.thelostland.com)

## **T h e T u n e s**

*These are the tunes for which we could identify authors.*

The Battle of Waterloo	lein.....	Andrew Marcus
Disconnect.....		Hanneke Cassel
The Idiot.....		Stan Rogers
The Misfit.....		Ian Robb
Miss Mona Dalziel.....		Karen Tweed
Time Will End.....		Jeremiah McLane
Scottische a Virmoux.....		Frédéric Paris
Splendid Isolation.....		Brendan McGlinchey
Under the Influence.....		Calum MacCrimmon

*For more information on the music used in rootbound, visit  
[www.maplemorris.com](http://www.maplemorris.com).*

# THANK YOU

Thank you to those who generously supported our Kickstarter<sup>®</sup> campaign.\*

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Aldona Joseph	Guxin Lin	Michael Resnick
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Elizabeth Locke	Ross Donihue	Will Conkling
Elliott Isen	Mary Chor	William Brown
Eric Damon Walters	Matt Smith	

*\*Names appear as they did on Kickstarter.*

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Peter Klosky  
Pinewoods Camp, Inc.  
The Pinewoods Morris Men  
Russ Springate  
Royal Scottish Country Dance Society  
The Toronto f. Morris Men

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