

Nathaniel Talbot to play The Barn

The Nathaniel Talbot Trio CD release concert is scheduled at The Barn in Sisters on March 3, at 7 p.m. The concert will feature Nathaniel Talbot on guitar and vocals, Anna Tivel on violin, and Sam Howard on bass.

Sisters' own Raman Ellis and Benji Nagel will open the show.

Nathaniel Talbot's music has dirt under its fingernails, the product of decades of hard work and crafting — retuning, replanting, and retelling. The result is true American roots music, combining the soulful edge of tradition with the Pacific Northwest's legacy of freedom and innovation.

It's a busy life for singer-songwriter and farmer Nathaniel Talbot, who runs an organic vegetable farm on Whidbey Island, in Washington state's Puget Sound.

"I work on the farm 60 hours a week between March and October. An average week during the busy season has two harvest days, one market day, and three days of weeding, planting, and everything else," he said.

In addition to farming, he's just released his fourth album, "Swamp Rose & Honeysuckle Vine," on Portland's Fluff & Gravy Records. The album marks the harvest of a different sort for Talbot, who has also spent over two decades tending to the crafts of songwriting and guitar-playing. His songs on the new album are intimately tied to the lush farmland and windswept vistas of Whidbey Island,

deeply rooted in the earth and American traditionalism.

"The folk music and big trees that surrounded my childhood were hugely impactful," says Talbot of his upbringing just a few hundred miles south of his farm, in the foothills just southeast of Portland. "I spent most of my free time running around the forest and making up adventures with the neighbor kids. The natural setting certainly imprinted on my sense of self and how I make music."

Raised on the music of Paul Simon and Eric Clapton, Talbot began playing at a young age, learning piano at seven and turning to guitar around thirteen, later steeping himself in the sounds of local artists like Soundgarden, Elliot Smith, and Kelly Joe Phelps.

Produced by Talbot along with Rob Stroup, Swamp Rose & Honeysuckle Vine marks a big step forward in Talbot's evolution as a lyricist and a storyteller. Becoming a farmer, he began to dig deep into our most human trait: storytelling.

"There was all of a sudden all this raw, untapped material to write about. Stuff that people used to sing about — stories about farmers wrestling the landscape, loving it, abusing it, old tractors getting stuck in the wetland, kids leaving the farm, soil blowing away in the wind, long hard days of work and the amazing sense of reward and connection with the land."

Swamp Rose & Honeysuckle Vine captures

the raw, live energy of Talbot's guitar-playing, and has a more stripped-down approach than his previous albums — no drums, fewer string arrangements, and sparse vocal harmonies. Tracking guitar and vocals live and solo, usually in just one or two takes, Talbot then brought in his quartet of Portland all-stars, Anna Tivel (violin, vocals), Sam Howard (double bass), Lincoln Crockett (mandolin) and Benji Nagel (dobro), whose auxiliary instrumentation is used intentionally and sparingly to great effect, filling in and conversing with the core of Talbot's playing and singing.

Local singer-songwriters and musicians Raman Ellis and Benji Nagel will open the show. The duo will perform music from Raman Ellis' soon-to-be-released new recording, "The Tides," recorded at the Brent Alan studio. The debut album is full of eloquent, personal lyrics brought to life by vocal harmonies, with violin, cello, dobro, mandolin, banjo, guitar, and piano.

Local musician and Sisters Folk Festival Creative Director Brad Tisdell says, "Raman is a hidden gem in the myriad of songwriters that are from Sisters and have come through the Americana Project. This album demonstrates the depth of his writing, the quality of his singing, and the overall originality of what he is going for



PHOTO PROVIDED

Nathaniel Talbot is a farmer and a singer-songwriter of note. He will play The Barn in Sisters on March 3.

musically. It is a beautiful collection of songs, produced to present the very best of his artistic insight."

Tickets for the Thursday, March 3 show are \$12 adult and \$10 youth, and will be

sold at the door. The Barn is located at 68467 Three Creek Rd., three-quarters of a mile outside of the town of Sisters. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. For ticket and show information call 541-408-0200.

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