

A Bluegrass Brother Act

Abrams Brothers Get Back To Their Roots In Performance At Dakota Theatre Monday

BY ANDREW ATWAL
andrew.atwal@yankton.net

When John and James Abrams were growing up in Canada, seeing their parents and grandparents play music was the inspiration for the children to take up careers in the music industry.

“We would all listen to my parents and grandparents when they would have practice in our living room,” John Abrams said. “My mom asked if we wanted to play the violin when we were really young, and that’s how we began playing music.”

John and James Abrams went on tour and would perform a few songs with their parents, which were some of their first shows before they became the Abrams Brothers touring group.

They’ll continue their tour at 7:30 p.m. Monday in Yankton at the Dakota Theatre as part of the Lewis and Clark Theatre Company’s concert series.

“We are excited to bring a group that we believe are going to become very famous in the not-so-distant future,” said Shauna Marlette, managing director of the Lewis and Clark Theatre Company. “The group currently has a video that is being featured on Country Music Television’s Top 20 countdown, which we believe is just the first of many for them.”

Marlette said she hopes that the community turns out to support the Abrams Brothers concert as they will entertain all ages and she really believes that they will put on an amazing show.

“Their style of music is just so fun and easy to listen to,” she said. “If you like music — any style of music — I believe you will love the Abrams Brothers. They are great musicians and you can tell that they love doing what they are doing.”

The Abrams Brothers have been on the road playing music for about the last 11 years.

“We’ve been playing longer than that, but our band and touring act has been around for 11 years,” John Abrams said. “We still play music with our family when we’re home, and we’re now the fourth generation to play music.”

The Abrams Brothers just released their fourth studio album, “Northern Redemption,” in September.

“The music on the new record is mainly bluegrass, with old folk and gospel influences,” Abrams said. “It’s a real blend of that, with some contemporary styles. We think the album is really creating original Abrams Brothers music.”

With bands like The Lumineers and Mumford and Sons, considered a bluegrass and folk bands, recently producing the chart-topping hits “I Will Wait” and “Ho Hey,” the genres have enjoyed a renaissance with mainstream music.

“It’s fantastic that bluegrass and folk has been coming back the last few years,” Abrams said. “It’s inevitable, in a way; a generation of people have been fed so much plastic from the pop media outlets. People start turning to things organic and authentic again.”

He compared this movement to the disco generation of the 1970s.

“It was a counter-culture movement that came into the spotlight,” Abrams said. “People had a desire to listen to bands that played more authentic music, like The Eagles, for instance. It became a craze, and bands started playing music that was more traditional.”

He said he feels like this is happening again with bluegrass and folk music.

“To see attention given to the bluegrass, folk and Americana styles of music from our peer groups is real encouraging and it makes us feel great,” Abrams said. “We use that as a jumping-off point as far as our musical creativity goes.”

One of the Abrams Brothers’ favorite shows was at a festival in Israel.

“We’ll be going back for the fourth time this year to headline the Jacob’s Ladder Music Festival, which features a lot of folk music and is right on the Sea of Galilee,” Abrams said. “It’s a lot of fun, not just musically. There is a profound history in that region



The Abrams Brothers will perform in concert at the Dakota Theatre in downtown Yankton Monday night. The Canadian brothers feature a bluegrass sound that has returned to popularity thanks to the success of such acts at Mumford and Sons. (Courtesy Photo)

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BROTHERS | PAGE 8B