

A banner image featuring a sunset or sunrise scene with silhouettes of trees and a person. The text "Paul Bourdeau" and "Shane Simpson" is overlaid on the left side, and "Wild Rice" is overlaid on the right side.

Paul Bourdeau
Shane Simpson

Wild Rice

Wild Rice

an acoustic romp in the jazz grass

Ottawa guitarists Paul Bourdeau and Shane Simpson have joined musical forces numerous times over the past two decades. From standard jazz electric duo to acoustic excursions into blues and popular music, they have sought to blur the borders on various styles through their guitar playing. **Wild Rice** is a culmination of this collaboration, fusing bluegrass and jazz across 12 original compositions in the "jazzgrass" tradition.

In some ways the two are an odd pairing. Simpson has gained recognition as one of Canada's up and coming singer-songwriters with two strong CDs to his credit and a third in the works. Bourdeau, whose 2002 solo effort, **Raising the Juniper Tree** impressed jazz fans, has just released an all-electric CD with the acid-fusion band **Psychopomp**. Yet on **Wild Rice**, they are able to play with soul and brio while complementing each other's markedly different styles.

Bourdeau and Simpson are technically accomplished players, and there's hot playing aplenty, but never for its own sake. With Bourdeau and Simpson every note serves the catchy chords and powerful melodies that characterize **Wild Rice**. The recording captures the spirit of true improvisation - every track was recorded "live off the floor" at Segment Studios over a two-day period in August 2003.

Paul Bourdeau

Paul Bourdeau has been a guitar player and teacher in the Ottawa area for close to three decades, developing a reputation as "one of the finest jazz-fusion fingerstylists around." (Bruce Deachman - The Ottawa Citizen) He released his debut CD "Raising the Juniper Tree" in 2002, and has had numerous commercial studio sessions as a guitarist with Andrew Huggett and John Harris. In addition to album appearances on Cathy Miller's "Footprints on the Moon" and "Superwoman," Bourdeau was also the guitarist for The Speakers album "Songs I Never Wrote." Bourdeau has conducted jazz workshops with guitar legends Lenny Breau, Tal Farlow and Herb Ellis, and hosted the instructional video "the Guitar Style of Lenny Breau" released through Segment Multimedia in 1998. Bourdeau's dedication to the study of the guitar has led to transcriptions being published in Guitar Player Magazine, Acoustic Guitar and Just Jazz Guitar. He also has several books published through OFC Productions, including several on Bruce Cockburn and Stan Rogers.

Shane Simpson

Described as "remarkable for his guitar playing," (Gary Hayes, CBC Artscape) Shane Simpson's charging rhythms and melodic single note soloing have critics marvelling at his fretboard acrobatics. In addition to his prowess on the guitar, Simpson has been garnering an increasing amount of attention as a singer-songwriter since releasing his second CD "More Electric" last fall. The song "Nowhere Near" was one of 16 winning songs chosen from across the country as part of Canadian Musician Magazine's national Great Canadian Talent Search. 2003 performance highlights include appearances at the Montreal Jazz Festival, Mariposa Folk Festival, Ottawa Cisco Systems Bluesfest, as well as the inaugural 2003 Toronto Star Bluesfest where Simpson also hosted the "Not the Opera" and "Roots" stages.