

Wilkes Community College's



MerleFest®

Music. Moments. Memories.™

ON THE CAMPUS OF WILKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WILKESBORO, NC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MERLEFEST 25 ADDS PATRICK SIMMONS, DARRELL SCOTT & JOHN COWAN
PERFORMANCE TO FRIDAY'S SCHEDULE**



WILKESBORO, N.C. (March 5, 2012) —A performance from a trio of stellar artists – Patrick Simmons, Darrell Scott & John Cowan - has been added to the Friday night schedule of **MerleFest 25**, presented by Lowe's and slated for **April 26-29**.

This star-filled addition to the festival lineup is announced as fans can still take advantage of the **early bird ticket discount**, available through **March 12, 2012**. Ticket purchases for MerleFest 25 can be made on the web at www.merlefest.org or by calling 1-800-343-7857.

MerleFest is an annual homecoming of musicians and music fans, gathering to celebrate the memory of musician Eddy Merle Watson, beloved son of American music icon **Doc Watson**. The festival hosts over 90 artists, performing on 14 stages during the course of the four-day event. A complete list of confirmed performers is available at www.merlefest.org.

Patrick Simmons (guitar, vocals) is one of the driving forces behind legendary rock band The Doobie Brothers, whose influence and recordings continue to shape contemporary music today. The group racked up a string of gold and platinum albums in the U.S., along with a number of radio hits like "Listen to the Music," "Black Water," "China Grove," "What a Fool Believes" and many others. The Doobie Brothers performed at MerleFest last year as part of their international "World Gone Crazy" tour.

Many MerleFest fans will remember artist **Darrell Scott** from his visit to the festival last year as part of Robert Plant's Band of Joy; as a multi-instrumentalist, Scott lent his skills on vocals, guitar, mandolin, accordion, pedal and lap steel, and banjo to last year's closing performance on the Watson Stage. But many know Scott, a contemporary folk singer-songwriter with eight critically-acclaimed albums, as an incredibly successful country songwriter. More than 70 artists have recorded his songs, including

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everyone from the Dixie Chicks to Brad Paisley, Faith Hill, Travis Tritt, Kathy Mattea, Sam Bush, Guy Clark, John Cowan, Garth Brooks, Tim McGraw, Trace Adkins and more.

A favorite of the MerleFest regulars, **John Cowan** has appeared at the festival solo and as a member of New Grass Revival, the John Cowan Band, and last year with The Doobie Brothers. Cowan (bass, vocals), along with NGR bandmates Sam Bush, Béla Fleck and Pat Flynn, led the bluegrass revival of the '80s, introducing a new generation of music fans to an explosive, experimental brand of bluegrass often referred to as "newgrass." Over the years, whether in his own projects or as an in-demand session player, Cowan's ability to take audiences on a musical journey through multiple genres - everything from rock to soul to blues to country and beyond - has made him one of the most unique and universally loved and admired vocal artists of his generation, not just by fans and critics, but by fellow artists.

Over the years, lineup additions like this – as well as spontaneous collaborations and last-minute performances - have become part of the MerleFest legacy. To keep up with any additional changes and additions to this year's lineup – even during the festival – MerleFest encourages fans to sign up for the e-newsletter and to follow the festival through Facebook and Twitter. Links are available at www.merlefest.org.

MerleFest, considered one of the premiere music festivals in the country, is held on the campus of Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina. MerleFest was founded in 1988 in memory of Eddy Merle Watson and is a celebration of what Doc Watson calls "traditional plus" music, meaning the traditional music of the Appalachian region plus whatever other styles we were in the mood to play." The annual festival has become the primary fundraiser for the WCC Endowment Corporation, funding scholarships, capital projects and other educational needs.

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