

Biography

When Ivonne Hernandez was five years old, with only two years of experience playing the violin, she entered a fiddle contest at the **Saanich Fall Fair**. There she won a rosette for third place and thus her story began... she has placed in every competition she has entered since. By the age of three, she was able to listen to anything and play it by ear: classical music, **Don Messer** tunes and the **Latin music** of her roots. From that point on she was able to pick up and play almost any instrument from guitar and piano, to cello, flute, percussion and South American instruments. She also started acting at a young age appearing in musicals and dramatic roles alike.

In 1994, she and the other members of **Daniel Lapp's BC Fiddle Orchestra** opened for the **Crash Test Dummies** in front of a crowd of 60,000 at the **Commonwealth Games** in Victoria. In 1996, they also recorded a CD, "**Fiddleharmonic**", which explored both old and new sounds. Around that time, at the age of 13, Ivonne became the youngest member of the **Greater Victoria Youth Orchestra** and was quoted as liking Mozart but having little interest in rock'n'roll. Then in 1997, Ivonne and her younger sister, **Kalissa** (also a fiddler), formed a band they named "**Fiddle Mania**", performing their toe-tapping, high energy tunes and step-dancing at festivals, and fairs all over Vancouver Island. At Victoria's **FolkFest** Canada Day Celebrations in 1998, **Adrian Chamberlain** of the **Times Colonist** wrote of Fiddle Mania "*the sextet played such true-blue Canadian tunes as Maple Sugar and Red Wing...the group's country-fiddle/pop hybrid was warmly received by the holiday crowd filling benches and bleachers.*"

After winning the **Merritt Old Time Fiddler's** Provincial Competition title two years in a row, Ivonne returned there in 1998 as a judge. She was only 15 and it didn't stop there. She's been a **BC Provincial Champion** (she won it the first time when she was 13!) and, for three years running (1999-2001), a finalist at the **Canadian Grand Masters National Fiddle Competition** in Ottawa. But perhaps the sweetest victory was winning the **Grand North American Fiddle Championship 2000-2001** in Edmonton. A concert review shortly after had this to say. "*Not only did [she] dazzle the sell-out crowd with her technical brilliance, she exhibited a mastery of a variety of fiddle styles, including Scottish, old-time, bluegrass and Cajun.*" – Shannon Morrell, Williams Lake Tribune

As one of Canada's hottest young performers, Ivonne has performed with or opened for **Alan Jackson, Carolyn Dawn Johnson, The Paperboys, Barachois, Natalie MacMaster, Jann Arden, Julian Austin, Ben Heppner** and **Oscar Lopez**. Her talent, passion and charm have taken her all over North America. She has performed for the **Governor General of Canada**, Adrienne Clarkson and has hit the stage at such big name festivals as "**Fiddles of the World**" in Halifax, the **Flora MacDonald Highland Games** in North Carolina, the **Ottawa Folk Festival**, the **Celtic Colours International Festival After Hours Festival Club** in Cape Breton, the **Vancouver Folk Festival**, the **Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous Festival**, the **Cumberland Celtic Festival** in Maryland and **RootsFest** in Victoria. Ivonne has appeared on **Much Music, The New RO, City TV, CHTV** and Europe's **TV5** as well as several **CBC Radio** programs including **The Vicki Gabereau Show**. A consummate entertainer, she is constantly in motion, whether dancing, fiddling or singing...an energy that is passed on to the audience wherever she performs.

Asked about her **Debut CD "Playing With Fire"**, she says "I'm going to be playing some traditional fiddle tunes, but my background is Chilean on my father's side and east coast on my mother's side, so all that will come together with my own modern sound." Guests include **Scott Henderson** on saxophone and **Daniel Lapp** on keyboard and guitar. As Daniel writes in the liner notes, "*Enjoy this album, the first from a young fiddler whose splendid technique commands attention and deserves accolades but which never interferes with a spirited and soulful performance, which is at the heart of all great fiddling.*"