Robert Zielinski began playing the fiddle at age eight, learning to play by ear from his mentors Sean Doherty and later Mick Doherty (no relation) in Perth, Western Australia. Sean introduced Rob to Mick Doherty when he was twelve and it changed his life. Mick hailed from a long line of travelling fiddle players, storytellers and tinsmiths from Donegal. His Uncle Johnny Doherty was an iconic fiddler and featured in Ireland’s RTE documentary *The Fiddler On The Road*.

At seventeen Rob travelled to Ireland where he spent fourteen years on the West coast immersing himself in the music of the older players. There he was played with and was influenced by musicians such as P.J and Martin Hayes, Paddy Canny, Martin Rochford, Francie Donnolly, Junior Creehan, Bobby Casey and Joe Ryan. Andy Davey, master of the sligo style of fiddle playing, became the most musical man Robert ever met and his mentor for ten years. Robert’s other musical influences include Paddy Fahey, Andy Mgann, Tommy Potts, Michael Coleman, Lad O'Bourne, Ally Bain and Johnny Doherty.

Over the years Robert has developed a large repertoire of slow airs, jigs, reels, strathpeys, highlands, and original compositions. In the year 2012 Mick Doherty and Rob released their album *Out West* to preserve the musical legacy of Mick's family. This album was produced by The National Library of Australia and launched at Fairbridge Festival when Mick was 88 years old. Rob released his debut album *The Day Dawn* in 2018; the culmination of 20 years worth of recording sessions. Robert has toured in Europe and America and In the year 2000, he won Ireland's Michael Coleman Traditional Fiddle Player of the Year Award. He has played at countless iconic venues and festivals including Fairbridge Festival, The National Folk Festival, Turning Wave Festival, the Fly By Night Musicians Club and The Melbourne Recital Centre. He has been a guest soloist with *The Perth Symphony Orchestra*, and *The New Palm Court Orchestra*.

Robert is also a highly regarded violin-maker and teacher. He taught music for three years at the Galway School of Traditional Irish Music and has continued to teach ever since. Robert’s primary instrument is a violin of his own making. It is his own model built for his particular frame. It was made from 80 year old maple and at least 60 year old spruce that Robert selected in Italy. Robert has studied violin-making with makers such as Jeremie Le Grand, Hugo Vegtor, and Bertrandt Galen. The first violin Rob ever made was played by the concertmaster of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra in the Perth Concert Hall.