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galwaytradfest

Féile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe

November 11-17, 2024.



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Issue No. 344 November 2024

FOREWORD

NURTURING YOUTH

In this edition, we touch on the importance of bringing gifted young musicians and singers into the scene, highlighted in the Return to London Town Festival's Trad Gathering, tasking dozens of young players from across the city with researching and playing a repertoire of a known tradition bearer. Dawn Beaton from Cape Breton's Celtic Colours tells us about an upcoming festival concert to celebrate the short but productive life of fiddler Tara Lynne Touesnard, who had 3 albums released by the age of 21.

Caoimhín Vallely tells us about the upcoming William Kennedy Piping Festival, which includes five public concerts, a schools concert and the Mark Donnelly Piping Academy. Tara Breen and Pádraig Rynne recall being spotted by Kieran Hanrahan when they were young players in Clare; that initial encouragement has led them on to profound professional careers. They tell us more about their collaboration with guitarist Jim Murray in our feature on their *Odyssey* album. Damian McKee talks about his new album and his commitment to passing on the tradition to the next generation.

Bruce Victor in his series on Music and Medicine, extols the benefits of set dancing, an activity that has been proven to slow down some of the signs of ageing.

The brand new Galway TradFest will take place at multiple locations across Galway from November 11th to 17th, and will feature concerts, masterclasses in music, song and dance, a festival session trail, instrument taster sessions, theatre and more.

Traditional music is for the young at heart.

Slán
Seán L



COVER STORY

31 GALWAY TRADFEST BY MUSIC GENERATION GALWAY COUNTY ANNOUNCED

The inaugural Galway TradFest, a new initiative by Music Generation Galway County, will take place across Galway from Monday 11th – Sunday 17th, November 2024.

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Mark Lysaght had the pleasure of speaking with John via Zoom recently to find out more about *Fíoruiscé*, which is a remarkable piece of work.

20 DAMIAN MCKEE'S MOYOLA COTTAGE

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22 THREE MAKE AN ODYSSEY

Seán Laffey talks to fiddler Tara Breen, concertina player Pádraig Rynne and guitarist Jim Murray about their new album, *Odyssey*.

24 CELTIC COLOURS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Seán Laffey asks Dawn Beaton, the Artistic Director of Celtic Colours, "what's in store at this year's edition?"

26 EMER DUNNE : RUNNING BACK TO YOU

Singer Emer Dunne has enjoyed great success since her first album was released in 2021 - she has just issued a new single *Running Back To You* and as Mark Lysaght discovers, her future looks bright!

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41 RETURN TO LONDON TOWN

The 26th annual festival of traditional Irish music, song and dance 'Return to London Town' (RtLT) is back; Karen Ryan tells us what to expect.

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Seán Laffey talks to Caoimhín Vallely, the festival's artistic director, who tells us what is in store in Armagh this coming November.

Publisher : Robert Heuston
Editorial : Seán Laffey
Design : John Barrett
Text Editor
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**For Editorial, News, CD Reviews,
Tours & Advertising Enquiries Contact:**
Select Media
c/o Irish Music Magazine
4-5 Burton Hall Road, Sandyford
Dublin 18, Ireland
Tel: 01 6622266
Email : info@selectmedialtd.com

Contributors:
Aidan O' Hara (RIP), Melissa Ward,
Deirdre Cronin, Grainne McCool, Anne
Marie Kennedy, Reidin O' Flynn (RIP),
John O' Regan, Edel McLaughlin, Paul
Keating, Michael Lange, Mark Lysaght,
John Brophy, Philippe Cousin, Alex
Monaghan, Nicky Rossiter, Caroline
Tatem, Chris Keenan, Frank Grealley,
Fergal Woods, Anita Lock, Bruce S.
Victor, Mary Beth McCormack, Dave
McNally, Austin Comerton, Maryann
McTeague Keifer (RIP).

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TRADFEST 2025

22-26 JAN

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**Tom Paxton Ralph McTell
Transatlantic Women:**

with Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Maura O'Connell,
Muireann Nic Aomhlaibh, Julie Fowlis, String Sisters

**The Scratch Frankie Gavin and De Dannan & Biird
Women of Note with Aoife Scott & Peggy Seeger**

Eric Bibb Lindisfarne Féile Kíla

Wallis Bird - Vision of Venus

Stockton's Wing Eleanor McEvoy

Scullion Seán Keane Martin Simpson

Stephen Rea & Neil Martin

Karen Casey - The Women we will rise

Liz & Yvonne Kane with John Blake Macalla

Mike Hanrahan & Eleanor Shanley Luka Bloom

Mick Hanly with Anto Drennan and Eoin O'Neill

Steo Wall The Henry Girls Tara Breen

Yankari & Ines Khai Emma Langford Dug

Landless George Murphy & The Rising Sons

Dublin Pride Géilí Louise Mulcahy

Evelyn Kallansee & Declan Sinnott Sharyn Ward

Lauren Ní Néill Toshin Eoghan Ó Ceannabhaín

Bridín Elaine Reilly Diarmuid Ó Meachair

Jacqui Martin & Derek Hickey

Paudie O'Connor & Aoife Ni Chaoimh

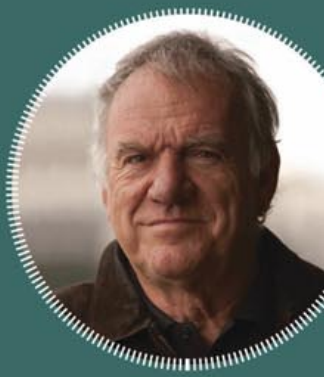
plus many more to be announced

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FESTIVALS

54 CELTIC COLOURS RETURNS FOR ITS 28th YEAR

The very best of Cape Breton Island will be on display during nine magical days and nights of music, dance, scenery, and hospitality when the Celtic Colours International Festival—presented by TD Bank Group—returns for its 28th year, October 11-19.

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20 years of Ireland's biggest celebration of trad & folk music.

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Brought to you in association with the Online Academy of Irish Music (OAIM).

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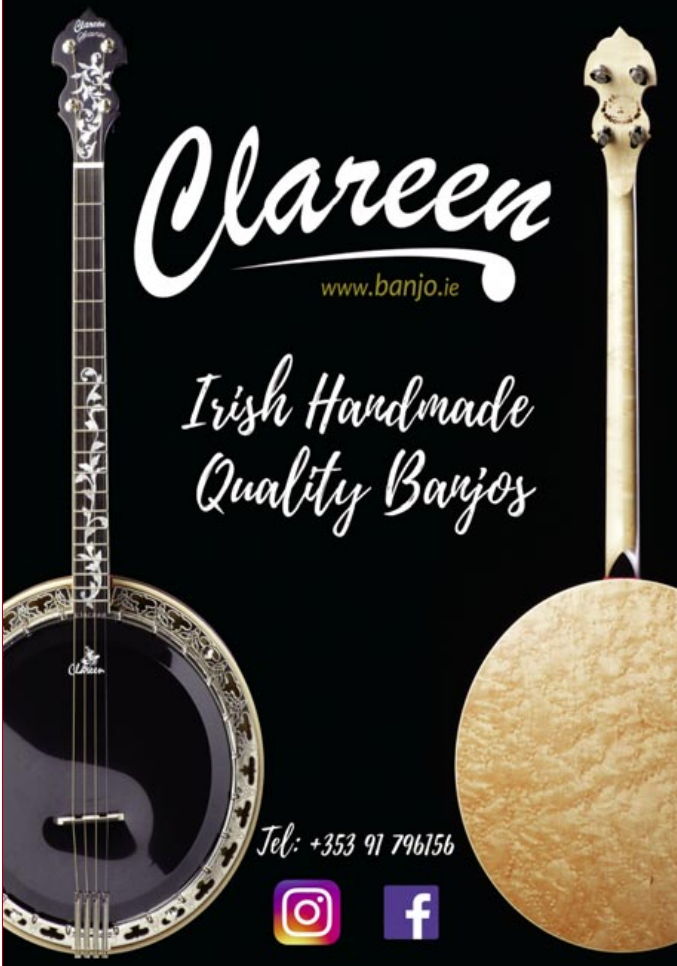


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REEL IRISH RADIO SHOW**www.wioxradio.org**

Reel Irish is an exploration, appreciation and celebration of Irish Traditional Music broadcast from an independent, all volunteer radio station, WIOX FM, in the northern Catskill mountains town of Roxbury in upstate New York.

The show was created by Richie Berger, an uilleann piper and fiddler from Southern Schoharie County when he was a piping student of current show host Tom Wadsworth. Every other Saturday from 10AM EST 'til noon, Tom plays the music that was danced to with delight at crossroads and in kitchens, community and parish halls.

From set dances and reels, hornpipes, jigs and polkas, the biweekly show presents musicians who established and preserved the tradition through the recording of 'the tunes' as well as the new generation of players who are 'carrying the tune' for the dancers and listeners of tomorrow.

Recognizing the need for the occasional story, songs in Irish and English are also featured as is spoken word so as to give the dancers and musicians a bit of a break.

If ever you find yourself in the northern Catskill mountains and are no more than twenty miles from Roxbury, you can tune your radio to 91.3 FM.

Elsewhere in the world streaming at: www.wioxradio.org

IRISH MUSIC CAFÉ RADIO SHOW PROVIDES WORLDWIDE PLATFORM FOR IRISH MUSIC**www.CRBRadio.com & www.IrishMusicCafe.com**

The Irish Music Café Radio Show based near Detroit Michigan is providing a worldwide platform for Irish music and artists. Now broadcasting in its eighth year, the Irish Music Café plays all genres of Irish music from the legends of Irish music as well as Irish singers and songwriters that are just beginning their professional musical careers.

"As an Irish musician in Detroit, the Irish Music Cafe is a great resource for getting my music out into the world. The welcome in-studio is second to none with great fun and banter from hosts Pat, Erin and Dave. It's always great craic. The genuine love of Ireland and

our culture is palpable and like a great Irish pub it's a place to hear the news, connect with friends and listen to the music." - Enda Reilly.

The Irish Music Cafe Radio Show plays a great mix of Irish songs and tunes including weekly interviews with the artists, singers and songwriters from Ireland and beyond.

Please submit your music for airplay consideration to pat@irishmusiccafe.com

Listen live every Monday 9–11 pm (Irish time) and 4-6 pm (US ET) on www.CRBRadio.com and www.IrishMusicCafe.com with podcasts available anytime on www.IrishMusicCafe.com. Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/irishmusiccafe

CARBONY CELTIC WINDS**www.Carbony.com**

Carbony Celtic Winds offer musicians innovative musical instruments that blend the advantages of modern carbon fiber technology with the time-tested designs of traditional craftsmen. This unique carbon fiber process has a lay-up perfected to match the fiber structure and density of African Blackwood, proving a warm resonance. The aviation grade material is stable in all temperatures and climates creating an instrument that stays in tune and needs no settling or warmup.

Our designs are recreations of some of the best traditional instruments ever made. All the critical geometries are molded not reamed so the repeatability and surface finish are perfected. With derived equations for establishing the frequency relationships, we offer a full line of whistles and flutes in all keys. We also specialize in close hole spacing. With our angled chimney technology, we create instruments that are easy for everyone to play. Custom work is also a specialty, so if there is a project or an instrument that needs carbon fiber replication, Carbony Celtic Winds can help. The selection of the material also creates flutes, whistles and pipes that are virtually indestructible so all instruments come with a lifetime warranty. Carbony Celtic Winds are used by professional musicians around the globe.

Check out the full line of products at www.Carbony.com and shots of our appearances at www.facebook.com/CarbonyCelticWinds

GAEL LINN TALENT COMPETITIONS**www.gael-linn.ie****SIANSA**

This is a competition for traditional music groups with the support of RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta and Irish Music Magazine, to encourage and give a platform to the best of the country's young traditional music and singing talent. What is special about Siansa Gael Linn is that even though it is a competition, the young musicians receive mentoring from established musicians.

Groups are invited to put together a 10 - 12 minute musical set. Each recording will be listened to by a well-known musician and a critique provided. Groups will be selected to take part in the second stage of the competition. *Workshops* will be held in different venues across the country. Well-known musicians/singers will conduct the workshops and will advise the groups. 8 groups will be selected to participate in the final. *The Final* takes place in a prominent venue and the 8 groups have the opportunity to perform on a prestigious stage. RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta will live-broadcast the event.

Further details about prizes etc, go to <https://www.gael-linn.ie/siansa> SCLÉIP

Scléip is an exciting and fun talent competition open to Irish Medium/Gaeltacht post-primary schools only, with an emphasis on the contemporary arts. Post-primary students are given the opportunity to perform music and songs in front of audiences and judges in venues across the country. The Categories include *Solo Instrumental and Singing, Solo Singing With Backing Track, Solo Instrumental Music only, Pop Group/Rock Group* and *Group Singing*.

We are delighted to partner with NOS.ie to present the NÓS Award to the best newly composed song at the Scléip Gael Linn final.

Further details about prizes etc, go to <https://www.gael-linn.ie/scleip>

MUSIC EVENTS AUTUMN 2024

SAT 12 OCT 2024
NIALL MCCABE
DOORS: 7.30PM | £20/£18



FRI 18, SAT 19, SUN 20 OCT 2024
THE SHARON SHANNON TRIO
DOORS: 7.30PM | £27.50/£25



THU 24 OCT 2024
CARMINA WITH SPECIAL GUEST, MASTER UILLEANN PIPER, DIARMAID MOYNIHAN
DOORS: 7PM | £16/14



FRI 08 & SAT 09 NOV 2024
ELEANOR MCEVOY 2024 UK TOUR
DOORS: 7.30PM | £24/£22



THU 14 NOV 2024
ANDY IRVINE IN CONCERT
DOORS: 7PM | £22/£20



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ICC LIVE MUSIC EVENTS & MORE (OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2024)

Autumn Music at The Irish Cultural Centre

www.irishculturalcentre.co.uk

The Irish Cultural Centre in Hammersmith is thrilled to present an exciting lineup of events celebrating the richness of Irish musical heritage and featuring some of Ireland's most esteemed musicians.

The ICC is thrilled to welcome Niall McCabe to the stage on the 12th of October, to enchant us with an evening of musical storytelling and magical guitar skill.

The legendary Sharon Shannon Trio will take the stage from the 18th to the 20th of October, delivering an energetic blend of traditional tunes and original compositions.

On 24th of October, Celtic folk jazz pioneers, Carmina, graces our stage, accompanied by special guest, the master uilleann piper, Diarmaid Moynihan, offering a captivating performance that blends folk, jazz, and world music influences.

The magic continues into November as we host the opening night of Eleanor McEvoy's 2024 UK Tour on the 8th and 9th. Her emotive lyrics and enchanting melodies promise a night of musical brilliance.

Later in the month, the iconic Andy Irvine returns to our stage on the 14th November, bringing his much celebrated blend of Irish and Balkan influences to our audience.

Immerse yourself in the rich tapestry of Irish music and culture. Book your tickets now!

The Irish Cultural Centre has been offering the most extensive and diverse Irish Culture programme to the UK and beyond for 30 years.

For more information, visit: www.irishculturalcentre.co.uk

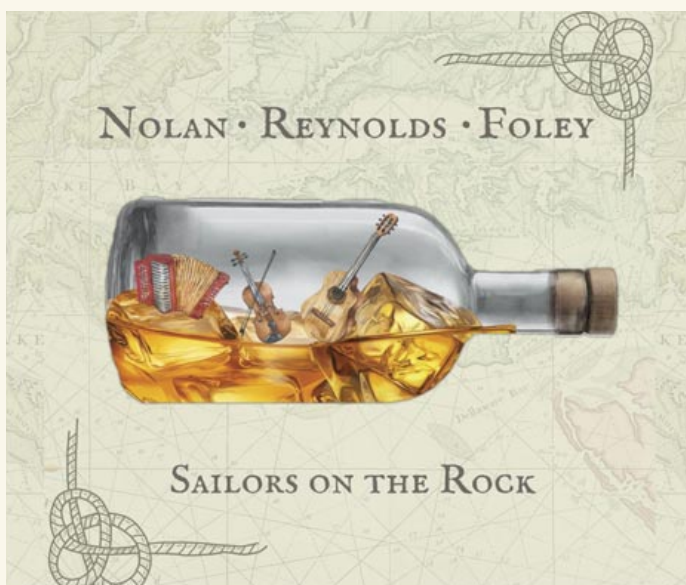
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Browse our Events Programme:

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NOLAN • REYNOLDS • FOLEY

SAILORS ON THE ROCK

Veteran musicians and native New Yorkers, John Reynolds, John Nolan & Bruce Foley have performed as The Sailors on the Rock aboard the floating festival at sea known as the Joanie Madden Folk'N Irish Cruise.

"Sailors on the Rock is a perfectly delightful album with a throwback aura. Its mix of ballad and ballroom recalls an earlier era of Irish music that many readers will recognize."

- Daniel Neely

Download & Stream
brucefoleymusic.bandcamp.com/album/sailors-on-the-rock

BLAME NOT THE BARD

www.blamenotthebard.com

Blame Not the Bard was formed in 2015. While the band first began as a side project between friends, the founding members were soon delighted to see that their love for fiery instrumentals, unearthing captivating stories, and getting the whole crowd involved was catching on. In the years that have followed, they have played hundreds of shows across the heart of the United States, lighting up stages in intimate lounges and major festivals and concert series including the Kansas City Irish Fest, Levitt AMP Galva Music Series, and mainstage appearances at the Iowa Irish Fest.

As they approach their tenth year as a band, Blame Not the Bard is ready to celebrate in style! This fall, they will be hitting the recording studio again to release a high-octane single that is sure to dazzle new audiences and fans that have been with them from the beginning.

You can learn more about Blame Not the Bard, their tenth anniversary celebrations, and the release of their single by heading to their website, www.blamenotthebard.com, Facebook at www.facebook.com/BlameNotTheBard or Instagram @blamenotthebard.

DAMIAN MCKEE: MOYOLA COTTAGE

damianmckee.com

Damian McKee was brought up in Dunloy, Co. Antrim. He is a founder member of the band Beoga and is a renowned accordion player who has performed on a myriad of stages across the world. Damian is a prolific composer with a wide repertoire of self-penned tunes, many of which have been recorded during his time with Beoga.

Damian's much anticipated album, *Moyola Cottage* has just been released in 2024. This is his debut solo album of 10 original tracks all written from the heart and inspired by home, family and memories. It features tunes ranging from melodic slow pieces to moody marches and of course a plethora of reels, jigs and polkas, arranged with a bit of attitude.

It was recorded and engineered by Damian's band mate and great friend, Liam Bradley at Fortwilliam Studios. He is joined on this album by a host of superb musicians, Liam Bradley, Niall Hanna, Rachel McGarrity, Brona Graham, Chris McGlone, Anthony Davis, Eamon Murray, Paul O'Donnell and Damian's wife, Maureen.

Damian has produced an innovative album that allows his audience to appreciate the experience of his traditional and more contemporary music creativity.

Find out more at damianmckee.com

bodhrán-info : NEW SKINS AND FRAMES SHOP NOW AVAILABLE

www.bodhran-info.com

bodhrán-info is a website fully dedicated to the bodhrán, run by Rolf Wagels, who has spent the last 30 years touring the world, playing, and teaching the Irish frame drum. The site offers a wealth of information, including the history of the bodhrán, a buyer's guide, and the latest updates on innovations in bodhrán craftsmanship and playing techniques.

New to the shop: You can now order skins and frames for the **ChangeHED system**, as well as synthetic skins for **HEDge** and **Rebellion bodhráns**.

The **ChangeHED skin-holding system** allows you to easily swap out the drumhead and tuning rim, both of which play a crucial role in shaping the instrument's sound. You can choose from a selection of pre-configured skins and frames, including synthetic options, or you can fully customise your own. Options include selecting the type of bodhrán skin, the placement of the spine (if you choose one), and adding personal touches like ribbons and nails for decoration.

For more details, visit:

<https://www.bodhran-info.de/en/extras/skins-and-frames-for-changeded>.

Gael Linn

Traditional Music & Contemporary Arts Competitions



Siansa Gael Linn – Young Traditional Music Group
(with the support of Raidió na Gaeltachta & Irish Music Magazine)

Scléip Gael Linn – Music, Singing and Contemporary Arts
sponsored by Foras na Gaeilge

All Information from www.gael-linn.ie



Additionally, the **HEDge** and its predecessor, the **Rebellion**, have always been compatible with any standard 14-inch drum set skins. While you can find a wide variety of options at music shops worldwide, **bodhrán-info** now offers a curated selection of synthetic skins for these drums. Each **Remo skin** is specially treated and taped by Christian Hedwitschak to ensure optimal sound quality. **For more information, visit:**

<https://www.bodhran-info.de/en/extras/skins-for-hedge-and-rebellion>.

DAVE SHERIDAN'S TRADITIONAL IRISH FLUTE COURSE

www.tradmusic.ie

Dave Sheridan is undoubtedly a luminary in the realm of traditional Irish flute music. Currently a member of traditional group Garadice, with Eleanor Shanley, Pdraig Mc Govern and John Mc Cartin, Dave is steeped in the flute tradition of Co. Leitrim. He has channelled his musical prowess and 25 years of teaching expertise into creating an exceptional platform for aspiring musicians. His wealth of experience has culminated in the creation of a comprehensive traditional Irish flute course, tailor-made for learners of all levels.

Upon enrolling in Dave's course, students gain immediate access to a trove of over 50 lessons meticulously designed to guide them from novice to proficient session flute players. Whether you're taking your very first steps or an adept musician seeking refinement, Dave's program accommodates all levels of expertise. The course is structured into levels, with each tier comprising 12 lessons that progressively enhance your fluency on the traditional Irish Flute.

A distinctive aspect of Dave's teaching approach is his emphasis on musical ingredients for example ornamentation, taps, cuts, rolls, glottal stops, crans, rhythmic triplets, phrasing and breath control as well as other important essential elements unique to the flute. At the conclusion of each level, students are encouraged to partake in a session, where you will perform with a backing track that features

four tunes learned throughout that level. This practical hands-on experience fosters not just technical proficiency but also an authentic connection to the soul of Irish session music.

Moreover, Dave has extended his educational offerings with a new tin whistle course called "Couch to 5 Tunes" which is accessible to any age group. This program, designed for aspiring tin whistle players, requires only a tin whistle in the key of D and Dave will expertly guide you through the rest.

As Dave Sheridan launches www.tradmusic.ie, he has also sparked renewed interest in his own musical recordings. Albums like *Sheridan's Guesthouse* (2006), featuring esteemed musicians like Brian Rooney, Seamie O'Dowd, and Brian McDonagh, and *Drivin' Leitrim Timber* (2010), with the likes of Brian McGrath and Michael McCague, showcase his artistry and contributions to the rich tapestry of traditional Irish flute music.

For more information and a sample lesson check out www.tradmusic.ie or contact dave@tradmusic.ie

RANDALL STEPHEN HALL : SONGS FOR THE MOON SHED

www.randallstephensongs.com

A long journey of song making, recording and some craic hey!

As a teenager I played in garage bands. It was fun, something to do. As an art student in Belfast I continued the process. When I left college I kept the process going, writing songs with two of my friends, home recording. We didn't play gigs as such but we did write and record songs. A defiant noble art.

Then I had a 25 year hiatus, a wee break, totally focused on working as a full time illustrator. Then a storyteller, visiting schools. Drawing, spoofing and goofing about. Using wee original poems and stories, encouraging the children to sing. It was positive and healing as I didn't especially enjoy primary school myself.

But eventually these experiences merged into what I laughingly call *Folk N' Fusion* taking the folk idiom and anything you want, to create my own original material. (At least, I think so.)

I'm about to release a new album in early 2025, called *Wake The Blue Sleeper*. It will have lots of variety and the enjoyment of Folk and Fusion. I have eclectic tastes. Some would even call my work quirky. It certainly doesn't wear the sad saddle of *Mono-Genre*. A bit like wearing loose trousers with braces. Lots of wriggle room to go explore.

So, I'll leave you with that. This will be my 8th album. A mix of many things. I'm looking for opportunities to play small solo gigs in unusual spaces, to a listening audience. If you'd like to know more just say hello. - **Stephen Stiofán**.

www.randallstephensongs.com

Facebook, You Tube and Sound Cloud, plus "Hugh Midden Speaks" on Sound Cloud.

DON "BANJO" SMITH NEW RELEASE COMING SOON

www.donbanjosmith.com

In the spring of 2016, Don "Banjo" Smith set out to make a follow up album to *The Rose Sessions* that he and Marty "Moonshine" McKernan released the year before, not necessarily of the same vein, but of the same quality. In order to achieve that goal, he again recruited Marty as his Co-Producer/multi-instrumentalist, and song contributor, and Bob Both (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Both), of Twain Recording Studio in New Jersey, as Recording Engineer and Co-Producer.

The album is/was to be a Concept Album, similar to the one Earl Scruggs did in the early 70's (*Earl Scruggs with Family and Friends*), whereas Don would be featuring many of the very talented people he has performed with over the years. This has proven to be quite an undertaking with so far up to 14 different musicians, and several have been lost over this time, before they could be brought to the studio to record for this album. There are one or two more Don would like to bring in before this is over.

Don features the likes of frequent collaborator Marty McKernan, Jack Driscoll, Gary Oleyar, Mike Griffin, Mike Kobetitsch, Kevin

Reel Irish

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sonic journey
in Irish Traditional Music

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wioxradio.org

10AM to noon Eastern Standard Time

~ Upcoming Shows ~

12 & 26 October

9 & 23 November

7 & 21 December

4 & 18 January

DAN McCABE

BACK TO LIFE

TOUR DATES

OCTOBER 2024

Sat 26th Devenish Complex Belfast

NOVEMBER 2024

Fri 8th Canal Court Newry

Sat 9th Loughrea Hotel and Spa.

Sat 30th Royal Theatre Castlebar

JANUARY 2025

Fri 3rd Clayton Hotel Galway

Sat 4th Clayton Hotel Cork

Fri 10th Keadeen Hotel Newbridge

Sat 11th Kilmore Hotel Cavan

Sat 18th Carrickdale Hotel Dundalk

Fri 24th Riverside Park Enniscorthy

Sat 25th Abbey Hotel Donegal

Sun 26th Vicar St Dublin

Fri 3rd Tullyglass House Hotel Ballymena

FEBRUARY 2025

Sat 1st Headfort Arms Kells

Sat 8th Landmark Hotel Carrick-on-Shannon

Thurs 13th Glor Theatre Ennis

Sat 15th Woodford Dolmen Carlow

Sat 28th Rhu Glenn Hotel Waterford

MARCH 2025

Sat^{1st} Millennium Forum Derry

Sat 8th Armagh City Hotel

Sat 15th Arklow Bay Hotel

Sat 22nd Devenish Complex Belfast

Fri 28th INEC Killarney

Tickets available on [ticketmaster.ie](https://www.ticketmaster.ie)

Australian Tour 2025 to be announced

US Tour 2025 to be announced

Behan, Terry Kane, Jeanie Cassels, et al, playing a variety of instruments on a variety of songs, many of them Irish in origin. It was slated to be finished in the winter of 2019-20, but a break was taken in late Feb. to start playing during the busy season, and then Covid struck, and everything came to a grinding halt. Just as things were beginning to look up, new restrictions were put in place, keeping production stalled...but we didn't give up...on and off during 2021-2022, we put our noses to the grindstone, and with the help and encouragement of Bob Both, we finished recording, and started mixing in January of 2022.

We finally finished all of the mixing, and now the pre-production work (liner notes, credits, Album Cover Artwork) is done and being submitted, and we expect the finished product to be available sometime this autumn, look for it!

Find Don at www.donbanjosmith.com

GERRY O'CONNOR 2024 USA WINTER TOUR WITH KEVIN McELROY

www.gerryoconnor.net

County Louth Fiddle player Gerry O'Connor is set to return to the USA for his fourth visit this year, beginning with Fiddle Hell, which features 300 fiddle-related events and 20 concerts celebrating fiddle music worldwide. He will then tour the Northeast USA with guitarist-singer Kevin McElroy, offering teaching and lectures alongside performances. In recent years Gerry has been developing his career in North America whilst touring and recording with the legendary Irish Rovers who will be touring Canada with a new album next Spring.

Gerry, a founder member of esteemed groups Lá Lugh and Skylark, has collaborated with many notable traditional Irish musicians including members of The Chieftains, Boys of the Lough, Planxty, Bothy Band and De Dannan and has received several All Ireland awards over his 40-year professional career,

including the prestigious Comhaltas Bardic Award in 2018. He also published *The Rose in the Gap*, Dance Music of Oriel (Lughnasa Music) that year. With numerous accolades and experience as an instructor at the Willie Clancy Summer School and masterclasses internationally, Gerry is dedicated to sharing his expertise across Europe, North America and Australia.

Gerry will be accompanied by Kevin McElroy who has been playing Irish traditional music since he was a teenager, inspired by his family's music, dancing and Irish stories. Kevin is a guitarist, singer and fiddle player.

For more information, visit www.gerryoconnor.net & <https://www.kevinmcelroy.net/>
<https://www.facebook.com/GerryOConnorFiddle/> Find the list of USA tour dates on our advert on page 57 and at <https://gerryoconnor.net/events/>

For 2025 North American bookings/enquiries, contact Miki at celticbooking1st@gmail.com

HYDRA BY NUALA KENNEDY & EAMON O' LEARY

www.nualakennedy.com/store

"Sumptuous folk songs" Folk Album of the Month, The Guardian * * * *
"Dazzling" MOJO * * * *

"It doesn't get much better" KLOF

Following the hand of fate which guided them from a remote village in the Austrian Alps to a tiny island in Greece, long time musical collaborators, Nuala Kennedy and Eamon O' Leary have created an atmospheric new album of songs entitled *Hydra*.

Hydra is an island where cars are prohibited and the main mode of transport is by donkey or by foot. Recorded in 'The Old Carpet Factory' an eighteenth century mansion whose large open windows overlook the port, the album vibrates with the unhurried bohemian charm and luscious simplicity that made this place so attractive to past luminaries such as Henry Miller, Patrick Leigh Fermor, Lawrence Durrell, Leonard Cohen and his love Marianne Ihlen...

Special guests include Cathal McConnell, Anais Mitchell, Will Oldham, Liz Knowles and Brian MacGloinn (Ye Vagabonds).

Noted for their instrumental skills and songwriting as well as a rich tapestry of traditional song, Nuala and Eamon recorded *Hydra* live together in a spacious open room inside the old carpet factory, with windows opening onto the Aegean Sea. Here they present a timeless selection of stories of the sea, of love and courtship, of work and ritual, of emigration, of war... *Hydra* reverberates with an expansive sense of space, and a delight in place and storytelling.

Available now at [bandcamp](https://bandcamp.com) and www.nualakennedy.com/store

BRUCE MacGREGOR : MUSICIAN, BROADCASTER, COMPOSER

www.brucemacgregor.scot

Bruce MacGregor has been at the forefront of the Scottish fiddle revival over the last quarter of a century. As founder and front man of Blazin' Fiddles, he has championed the fiddle styles of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The band have taken Scottish fiddle music to a new dimension and enjoyed incredible success across the world, so it was a major surprise to hear of MacGregor's retirement. His final gig will be in Edinburgh's Usher Hall with guest artist Karen Matheson (Capercaillie) on St Andrew's Night (30th November).

"I've been thinking about it for a time now. The band's playing better than ever, but my involvement with so many other projects, particularly our bar 'MacGregor's' in Inverness has taken over."

Awarded "Best bar in Scotland", MacGregor's has become a beacon for trad music lovers in Scotland, with sessions, performances and concerts making it a cultural melting pot for locals and visitors alike.

As a noted composer, MacGregor's tunes won't be drying up. "Far from it, the fiddle is always on hand in the bar to join in with visitors. I'm still playing at festivals with various line ups, and I'm hoping for more inspiration now that I'm not on the M25!"

Teaching and performing at Glenties, Donegal Fiddle Festival 4th/5th October, performing with Blazin' Fiddles at Seamus Grant Weekend Sat

THE IRISH ROVERS



NO END IN SIGHT

The Wellerman Hey Boys Diabolical Things
Ballad of Tom Archer Dinosaurs
Donovan's Pub in Ballinasloe...

Canadian Folk Awards Nominee

TheIrishRoversMusic.com

WHAT IS CELTICMKE?



CelticMKE is a nonprofit organization based in Milwaukee, WI.

The brand CelticMKE was first introduced in 2016. While Milwaukee Irish Fest has been around since 1981, creating CelticMKE better represents the umbrella organization and all of its varied cultural activities and endeavors.



THEIR MISSION



CelticMKE's mission is to promote, preserve, and celebrate all aspects of Irish, Irish American and Celtic cultures, and to instill in current and future generations an appreciation of their heritage.



CULTURAL ENDEAVORS

CelticMKE has emerged into a thriving organization that celebrates the music, culture and history of Ireland, as well as other Celtic Nations, during its four-day festival Milwaukee Irish Fest, and with several initiatives and programs throughout the year.

CELTICMKE IS HOME TO ...

- Milwaukee Irish Fest
- Milwaukee Irish Fest Foundation
- Milwaukee Irish Fest Summer School
- Milwaukee Irish Fest School of Music
- Milwaukee Irish Fest Choirs
- Ward Irish Music Archives

plus

- cultural programming
- concerts
- family-friendly activities
- workshops

+ much more!



FÁILTE!

CelticMKE is your destination for Celtic content, resources, programming, and so much more.

It all started with a one-of-a-kind festival over 40 years ago. Now, CelticMKE is thrilled to offer art and music classes, fun family events, and concerts from some of the world's best Irish, Irish American and Celtic musicians all year long.



Scan to learn more about CelticMKE, their resources, events, archives catalog, and more!

DIVE INTO CELTIC CULTURE WITH CELTICMKE!

Start exploring your Irish and Celtic heritage - or discovering your own unique love for it - with CelticMKE today! Follow them on TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook - or visit their website!

12th October. Blazin in Beaulieu Highland music camp October 21st to 25th 2024, and Blazin Fiddles with Karen Matheson – Usher Hall Edinburgh 30th November 2024.

Find out more at www.brucemacgregor.scot

CATHY JORDAN'S CRANKIE ISLAND SONG PROJECT

www.crankieisland.com

Ireland's music and storytelling have captivated audiences worldwide for centuries, embodying tales of heartbreak, rebellion, joy, and the supernatural. Many traditional songs, deeply connected to Ireland's history and identity, have survived through oral tradition. Now, singer, Cathy Jordan, is on a mission to preserve these precious cultural gems by blending music and art through *The Crankie Island Song Project*.

Cathy, renowned as the lead singer with the traditional Irish band Dervish, has long been dedicated to preserving Irish folk songs. Her passion for these songs—collected from every county on the island—drives *The Crankie Island Project*. "Our songs are part of our folklore; they ignite memory and give us a sense of place," Cathy explains. "They connect us with the struggles and stories of our ancestors."

During the lockdown, Cathy began recording songs from her native Roscommon, collaborating with artist Peter Crann to illustrate them using a Crankie box—a storytelling device dating back to the 19th century. Since then, and supported by the Arts Council, she curated 32 songs, one from each county, and embarked on an extensive recording process with over 50 musicians.

The Crankie Island Project combines audio and visual narratives, featuring handcrafted Crankie boxes and illustrative scrolls by over 25 Irish artists. Each box visually narrates the song, offering a unique, immersive experience.

The digital album is available from the 27th of September on Bandcamp and at www.crankieisland.com. Enjoy the 32 captivating songs, each accompanied by evocative videos on our YouTube channel.

www.crankieisland.com

crankiesongs@gmail.com

ABOUT KEEGAN CELTIC TOURS

KeeganCelticTours.com

Keegan Celtic Tours was established in 2017 by Colm and Laura Keegan, award-winning musicians known for their work with Celtic Thunder. Outside of their years as performing musicians on some of the biggest stages around the world, they also have a background as qualified teachers, and these tours allow for the perfect blend of music, teaching, interaction and culture. Each tour is meticulously crafted to provide intimate performances, historical insights, and personal stories that bring the vibrant Celtic heritage to life. Colm, Irish, and Laura, Scottish, take 40-50 passengers on these unique and highly sought-after tours around their home countries, offering the opportunity to travel either by bus tours or as part of their chartered River Cruise of Scotland.

Here's what some of the previous passengers on their tours have to say: *Kathi Kotchi*: "Colm & Laura are the ultimate examples of the perfect hosts. They make everyone feel special." *Janet Banks*: "You're never alone on a tour with the Keegans. Everyone is treated like family." *Rhonda Perrett*: "There is truly nothing I have enjoyed more than your tours. The music, History, laughter, and so much fun are unlike any tour I have ever experienced. You do them the right way with so much thought and care!" *Margaret Way*: "Colm and Laura are amazing hosts. They care about each passenger and ensure all feel included. Looking forward to my next trip!"

Upcoming Keegan Celtic Tours:

2025: Ireland Spring Tour '25: Handful of Places Recently Made Available. Includes Cliffs of Moher, Galway, Lough Eske Castle, Belfast and seated tickets to the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin.

Scotland River Cruise '25 - sold out. UK Autumn Tour '25 - sold out. 2026: Scotland River Cruise '26 (Part I) - sold out. Scotland River Cruise '26 (Part II) - sold out.

Visit KeeganCelticTours.com and email: Travel@KeeganCelticTours.com

NEW RELEASE FROM MULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST BRÍDÍN FROM COUNTY SLIGO

Live Recording of *A Lament for John Donagher* by Josie McDermott
Facebook/Instagram - @bridinmusic

A Lament for John Donagher was composed by word renowned flute player Josie McDermott, in memory of BRÍDÍN's great-grandfather John Donagher who was a good friend. Josie wrote this slow air and entered it into a competition, which he then named it *A Lament for a Fiddle Player* because of competition rules. He won the competition with this fabulous air and BRÍDÍN has now released it with the original title, honouring her great grandfather John Donagher. The emotional slow air played on the flute transports you to back in time and with the added modern accompaniment such as drones on cello, fiddle and harp, they are giving it a new lease of life.

This track was recorded live at Belleek Castle, Co. Mayo and there is a music video also being released where you can watch them perform this piece live with all its character and emotion.

"It is an honour to play this beautiful slow air that Josie composed in memory of my great grandfather, John. It is very close to my heart and it used to make my late grandfather Gerry Donagher so proud."

Available to stream on Spotify and all other streaming platforms.

Spotify -

<https://open.spotify.com/track/78riLc50kKEQC7Ydd3dglC?si=900cb69042db4aee>

Facebook/Instagram - @bridinmusic

FRIENDLY FOLK RECORDS/OOB RECORDS

friendlyfolkrecords.org / oob-records.com

Label News: It has been almost one year since our announcement of merging services with sister labels, **Friendly Folk Records (FFR)** and **Oob Records**. Due to a high level of demo submissions and releases from our signed label artists, we are currently welcoming new acts who are interested in joining our label family for 2025 releases. Average timeline between demo submission to release date takes approximately three months.



Embark on a journey 'Beyond The Green Realm' with Drusuna Pagan Folk to uncover ancestral roots long forgotten. A tale of a distant past that still breathes, waiting to be heard by those who care to listen closely within the serene embrace of the green realm. Single released 22/September. Album released 4/October via Friendly Folk Records in digital and cd format.



Experience the vibrant, folksy charm of **UNADADANCE** by Ton Scherpenzeel. An irresistible blend of fun and rhythm! Available worldwide on over 200 digital platforms starting October 15, 2024

Richtung Freiheit Nov/2024 release from Luxembourg's dynamic folk-punk band, **Schöpfe Siwen**, is more than just an album; it's a call to embrace life boldly and fight for what really matters.




Demo submissions to Kathy Keller: info@friendlyfolkrecords.org / info@oob-records.com
Visit our webstore for Artist roster and all releases from both labels! oob-records.com/shop

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TOUR DATES

- | | | | |
|--------|---|--------|--|
| DEC 3 | FROSTBURG, MD - PEALER PAC, FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY | MAR 1 | DALLAS, TX - NORTH TEXAS IRISH FESTIVAL |
| DEC 5 | FAIRFIELD, CT - SACRED HEART COMMUNITY THEATRE | MAR 2 | DALLAS, TX - NORTH TEXAS IRISH FESTIVAL |
| DEC 6 | PORT WASHINGTON, NY - LANDMARK ON MAIN STREET | MAR 6 | BEACON, NY - THE TOWNE CRIER CAFE |
| DEC 7 | RIVERHEAD, NY - THE SUFFOLK - 2PM | MAR 7 | SOUTH ORANGE, NJ - SOUTH ORANGE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER |
| DEC 7 | RIVERHEAD, NY - THE SUFFOLK - 8PM | MAR 8 | WEST LONG BRANCH, NJ - POLLACK THEATRE, MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY |
| DEC 8 | RAHWAY, NJ - UNION COUNTY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER | MAR 9 | QUEENS, NY - KUPFERBERG CENTER FOR THE ARTS |
| DEC 9 | EAST DURHAM, NY - THE SHAMROCK HOUSE | MAR 10 | QUEENS, NY - KUPFERBERG CENTER FOR THE ARTS SCHOOL PERFORMANCE |
| DEC 10 | HOMER, NY - CENTER FOR THE ARTS OF HOMER | MAR 14 | WILMINGTON, DE - THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE |
| DEC 11 | WALTON, NY - WALTON THEATRE | MAR 15 | FAIRFAX, VA - CENTER FOR THE ARTS, GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY |
| DEC 13 | CHICAGO, IL - IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER, MAYFAIR THEATRE | MAR 16 | PEEKSKILL, NY - PARAMOUNT THEATRE |
| DEC 14 | EDGERTON, WI - EDGERTON PERFORMING ARTS CENTER | MAY 4 | ABBEEFEALE, LIMERICK - FLEADH BY THE FEALE |
| DEC 15 | BRONX, NY - SAINT BARNABAS H.S. AUDITORIUM - 5PM | JUN 20 | DUNGARVAN, CO. WATERFORD - TOWN HALL THEATRE - TUNEFEST |
| DEC 17 | OLD SAYBROOK, CT - KATHERINE HEPBURN CULTURAL ARTS CENTER | JUN 21 | DUNGARVAN, CO. WATERFORD - TOWN HALL THEATRE - TUNEFEST |
| DEC 18 | CONCORD, NH - CAPITOL CENTER FOR THE ARTS - BANK OF NH STAGE | JUN 28 | KILRUSH, CO. CLARE - VANDELEUR GARDENS |
| DEC 19 | SHIRLEY, MASSACHUSETTS - THE BULL RUN | JUL 31 | BUDAPEST, HUNGARY - JOANIE MADDEN'S DANUBE RIVER CRUISE |
| DEC 20 | PLYMOUTH, MA - THE SPIRE ARTS CENTER | AUG 1 | ESZTERGOM, HUNGARY - JOANIE MADDEN'S DANUBE RIVER CRUISE |
| DEC 21 | TARRYTOWN, NY - TARRYTOWN MUSIC HALL | AUG 2 | BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA - JOANIE MADDEN'S DANUBE RIVER CRUISE |
| DEC 22 | BETHLEHEM, PA - ZOELLNER ARTS CENTER AT LEHIGH UNIVERSITY | AUG 3 | VIENNA, AUSTRIA - JOANIE MADDEN'S DANUBE RIVER CRUISE |
| FEB 1 | ORLANDO, FL - JOANIE MADDEN'S FOLK 'N IRISH CRUISE | AUG 4 | DÜRNSTEIN, AUSTRIA - JOANIE MADDEN'S DANUBE RIVER CRUISE |
| FEB 2 | DAY AT SEA SAILING TO THE CARIBBEAN - JOANIE MADDEN'S CRUISE | AUG 5 | LINZ, AUSTRIA - JOANIE MADDEN'S DANUBE RIVER CRUISE |
| FEB 3 | PUERTO PLATA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC JOANIE MADDEN'S CRUISE | AUG 6 | REGENSBURG, GERMANY - JOANIE MADDEN'S DANUBE RIVER CRUISE |
| FEB 4 | CHARLOTTE AMALIE, ST. THOMAS - JOANIE MADDEN'S CRUISE | AUG 7 | PASSAU, GERMANY - JOANIE MADDEN'S DANUBE RIVER CRUISE |
| FEB 5 | TORTOLA, VIRGIN ISLANDS JOANIE MADDEN'S FOLK 'N IRISH CRUISE | AUG 15 | MILWAUKEE, WI - MILWAUKEE IRISH FEST |
| FEB 6 | DAY AT SEA - JOANIE MADDEN'S FOLK 'N IRISH CRUISE | AUG 16 | MILWAUKEE, WI - MILWAUKEE IRISH FEST |
| FEB 7 | GREAT STIRRUP CAY, BAHAMAS - JOANIE MADDEN'S CRUISE | AUG 17 | MILWAUKEE, WI - MILWAUKEE IRISH F |
| FEB 8 | PORT CANAVERAL - JOANIE MADDEN'S FOLK 'N IRISH CRUISE | | |

WWW.CHERISHTHELADIES.COM

Attention Musicians: If you are in search of full service distribution and promotion for your music, perhaps **Oob/FFR Records** is for you. Information on how to send your music for consideration can be found on our websites' FAQ section. Please keep in mind we are a record label; we are not a booking agency for live gigs or festivals. **Send demos to Kathy Keller at:** info@friendlyfolkrecords.org and/or info@oob-records.com

Interviews: The next issue of Irish Music Magazine features an interview with **Drusuna Pagan Folk (Portugal)** discussing their long anticipated second studio album, *Beyond the Green Realm* (Oct/2024) featuring Sephirus Oakborn and Rose Avalon. Future issue interviews: **Ton Scherpenzeel (Netherlands)**, **Schëppe Siwen (Luxemburg)**, and **The Midnight (Italy)**.

2024 Fall/Winter releases: *Unadadance* by, **Ton Scherpenzeel (Netherlands)**; *Into the Mist of Time*, by **Philhelmon, (Netherlands)**; *Richtung Fräiheet*, by **Schëppe Siwen (Luxemburg)**; *Willow Trees*, by **The Midnight (Italy)**; *The Witchfinder*, by **Peter Lawson (UK)**. Visit our webshop for these titles and more.

www.oob-records.com/shop. (Digital downloads on Spotify, Bandcamp, Deezer, and 200+ more platforms).

NEW SINGLE FROM LEE MATTHEWS : AN IRISH HOME www.leematthews.com

So far, it's been a great 2024 for Lee Matthews. After the release of his song *Simple Man*, which won "Song of the year" at the "Hot Country awards", Lee is back yet again with another original song titled *An Irish Home*. The song, written by Lee and produced by Jonathan Owens, tells the story of growing up in an Irish home and learning important core values that will never leave throughout life. The energetic, upbeat song complements Lee's signature sound with elements of Irish rock added to make this one of Lee's most exciting songs to date.

"When Lee first played me the demo for this song (says manager Paul Tinney), I knew this was going to be a big tune. The final result

is an awesome production with big Riverdance style drums complemented by a Bodhrán percussion. The Horslips style Celtic rock guitars lift an already energetic tune and the fiddle, banjo and low whistle parts are prominent throughout this Irish composition that Lee envisioned from the original demo."

Lee remains one of the most streamed Irish country music artists despite not having toured with his own band since lockdown, concentrating mostly on writing new multi genre material and doing guest appearances at festivals and live music venues.

Lee has amassed millions of streams annually on platforms like Spotify, YouTube and Apple Music, and with several more music releases in the pipeline, Lee is looking forward to touring again in 2025.

Please enjoy Lee's Brand New Single *An Irish Home* Out Now.
www.leematthews.com
Instagram @leematthewsmusic
Facebook @leematthewsmusic
YouTube @leematthewsmusic

THE IRISH ROVERS

www.theirishroversmusic.com

With 60 years under their widening belts, veterans of the international music scene continue to create new music and excite yet another generation of fans.

Recently, the legendary band hit Spotify's VIRAL TOP 50 in both the US and UK/ Ireland. They also recorded a new album, **No End In Sight** which included their original 1977 version of *The Wellerman* and a 2023 Canadian Folk Music Award nomination for their song *Hey Boys*.

In October 2024 the band returned home to Belfast to record their upcoming album, *THE BELFAST SESSIONS*. Producer Donal O'Connor of Redbox Studios is at the helm working with band leader George Millar. Millar says "It's been a lifelong ambition to record an album back home. I just can't believe it's taken 60 years to get it done."

Another lifelong ambition has been to put their name on their own whiskey. They released "The Unicorn" Whiskey, a triple distilled single potstill whiskey matured in a Spanish Oloroso cask this year on St. Patrick's Day.

Find out more at www.theirishroversmusic.com

WOLF LOESCHER BEGINS WORK ON FOURTH SOLO ALBUM <http://wololoco.com>

Colorado-based singer/storyteller Wolf Loescher has begun work on his fourth solo album which will feature traditional and modern songs from Scotland.

"I lived in Scotland as a boy, and I was inspired by the music of The Corries," said Wolf. "They sang songs about people, events, and battles from the 14th century, and it really gave me a different perspective on history. I was quite impressed that some people could maintain a grudge over hundreds of years. As the saying goes: 'In Europe, one hundred miles is a long way; in America, one hundred years is a long time'."

Loescher just returned from his first visit to Scotland in over 40 years, using the time to reconnect with the songs and stories of his youth, and to visit many places he's been singing about since the early 1980s. In Scotland, Loescher was able to sing songs about places like Glen Coe, Loch Lomond, Loch Tay, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Falkirk – all while sitting in those actual places.

Loescher will be working again with his creative team of Scooter Muse (audio engineering, guitar, banjo), Rich Brotherton (audio engineering, guitar) and Tony Horning (graphic design), and many special musical guests.

A Kickstarter project to fund the album will launch Fall 2024, and the album release is planned for Spring 2025.

Previous albums are available on Bandcamp, Spotify, or wherever you download or stream music. Find out more at wololoco.com

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The Vintage €3500
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Riveted Brass Concertina Reeds.
(Similar reeds to 7mount)



The Clare €2500
Walnut & Cherry Ends
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(Similar reeds to Claddagh, Morse)



The Clare €2500
Steel Ends
Handmade Accordion Reeds
(Similar reeds to Claddagh, Morse)

JOHN SPILLANE'S MAGNUM OPUS – FÍORUISCE

Mark Lysaght had the pleasure of speaking with John via Zoom recently to find out more about *Fíoruisce*, which is a remarkable piece of work.



Photo : Clare Keogh

Cork-born, John Spillane occupies a unique position on the Irish music scene; he has devoted his adult life to the pursuit of an artistic vision which was (and is) constantly evolving, and he has had the courage and conviction to let it develop organically.

John Spillane is deeply connected to his birthplace and home county, and to the Irish language and culture. Some years ago, he had an idea

“I got a lot of inspiration from Seán Ó Tuama’s work with *Compántas Chorcaí*”

to develop a beloved Cork fairy tale as a traditional folk opera, and the result is *Fíoruisce - the Legend of the Lough*, now released as a concept album featuring guest singers Ríoghnach Connolly, Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin, Niamh Farrell and Nell Ní Chróinín.

“I had written various songs featuring places in Cork over the years, and I had The Lough in my sights for a while, so I adapted a fairytale written by Thomas Crofton Croker into a full-length opera including scenes of war, lullabies, lamentations, love etc. I did quite a lot of research on the subject matter, then composing the piece took me three years, and I workshopped it with various theatre directors - based on this, I realised who I wanted as the principals, and I was lucky that they all agreed to take part.”

John’s enthusiasm, energy and commitment to this project shines through during our conversation, and he feels that the piece is deeply allegorical on a number of levels, not least its connection to modern themes such as the global availability of water and the effects of climate change on modern living. “Never underestimate the power of myth,” John told me. “What seems at first to be a folk tale is actually a deeper reflection of major themes that are extremely relevant today.”

Once the composition phase was complete, John had to coordinate the availability of the main participants, and the recording took place at Wavefield Recordings in Clonakilty. He co-produced the album with Brian Casey, enlisting the services of top musicians such as flute player Alan (ALDOC) Doherty, cellist Lea Miklody and Aisling Unwin on harp, with John providing Spanish guitar parts himself. Overall, this was a

massive undertaking and required a lot of commitment and funding, some of which came from external sponsorship in various forms, but John himself had to invest hugely in the completion of the work.

The music is elegant and deeply evocative of the various themes with some outstanding vocal performances; John selected the principals with great care and the blend is amazingly effective. Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin’s voice is uniquely powerful as the King, and full use is made of folk and traditional styles to convey a hugely authentic performance. Percussion by Andrew O’Sullivan and Fionn Hennessy Hayes is extremely impressive throughout, and the care and attention devoted to the recording really shines through.

“I got a lot of inspiration from Seán Ó Tuama’s work with *Compántas Chorcaí* and from other experts and scholars with mentorship from Michelle O’Riordan from the Institute of Advanced Studies in Dublin,” John told me. “I was delighted when she only suggested minor tweaks to the finished work.” As the project progressed, the intense collaboration gave added momentum to the exposition of the work, and the launch event included an art exhibition by Megan Clancy, inspired by John’s music, at the Lough itself. A video was also made by ALDOC featuring the *Réamhcheol* (Overture), which is a great introduction to the work.

For John, this is hopefully just the beginning. He feels there is great potential to deliver it as a full stage production with plenty of dramatic content and opportunities to deliver an exciting visual depiction. “That’s really not my forte, so I would welcome interest from any artistic directors or theatre companies in bringing this to the next level,” he told me. The potential for an elaborate theatre experience is tantalising. In the right hands, the opera could be an amazing and deeply moving production.

The recording is now available in all major formats and is a really worthwhile and rewarding piece of music, deeply evocative of its themes and a reflection of the huge amount of commitment by John to its development and realisation. He also has a full programme of live performances lined up over the coming months - more details are available on his website and social media accounts.

You can watch the *Fíoruisce Overture* at www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ISxT-f932A and keep up to speed with John’s work at www.johnspillane.ie



Photo : Clare Keogh

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DAMIAN McKEE'S MOYOLA COTTAGE

Seán Laffey put in a phone call to Damian McKee to talk about the new solo album *Moyola Cottage*. Summer was busy for Damian with live album launches and teaching music.



Damian began playing the accordion back in 1977. "Playing back then was very much a family thing, something we did together, we all started at the same time, myself, my siblings and my parents. A new Comhaltas branch opened up in Dunloy, County Antrim and we all signed up for classes. My mother, sister, brother and myself played the same accordion; we didn't have one each back then." Obviously Damian excelled on the button box and was soon competing in Fleadhs, eventually becoming a respected teacher of the instrument, something which he continues to do to this day. "Passing on the tradition to young people is one of the most rewarding things you can do in Irish music," he tells me.

One of his past pupils became a founding member of Beoga, Seán Óg Graham. "Seán Óg is a fabulous multi-instrumentalist. He had a natural talent for music. It was obvious from our first lessons; there wasn't a tune he couldn't learn - he was like a musical sponge. There are a few students you come across that are good from the very start and it's a privilege to have them as pupils, and a responsibility too. You need to move them forward and acknowledge that they are likely to surpass you at some stage."

He says growing up in a family that all played together made the music very special. "I see that in my own students today.

There is one family I'm teaching, who span three generations, from the grandfather who is 84 to his young grandchildren. It's a pleasure to see the joy they are having being able to play tunes as a family."

Damian has been a member of Beoga for the past 22 years. "The four lads in the band had our first session together at the All Ireland Fleadh in Clonmel. Eamon Murray and Séan Óg Graham grew up with the Crosskeys Comhaltas Group. I had been working with Liam who was in big demand playing music at Irish dancing competitions. We knew each other indirectly and I suppose that's how we got together. The band as such began casually enough; we'd play sessions and do the odd gig, but as we gelled together, we found we were developing our own sound. Niamh Dunne joined in 2005 and we've been together now for over 20 years."

Originally most of Damian's tunes were composed for Beoga, which is one reason why it has taken so long for Damian to make a solo album. "There are three or four composers in Beoga. We bring new tunes to the table, and if there's a consensus that a tune will work, then we take it from there, and if a tune doesn't fit into the band's aesthetic, well that's also fine."

The Covid lockdown provided an opportunity for Damian to work on what would become *Moyola Cottage*. "I'm sure when we look back at the Covid pandemic, we'll see it was an amazing period of creativity in music. I threw myself into writing new tunes, and for the first time I started experimenting a little with Garage Band. I could add layers to my initial composition, it was such an enjoyable way of creating new music. Seán Óg owns a recording studio while Liam and Eamon have quite a bit of experience recording music. Thankfully I don't really have to worry about that side of things. I don't read music and my composing comes straight from my playing. I find if I get the first riff of a tune worked out, then the rest usually comes a little easier.

"When I spoke to Liam about putting the album together I knew there was a lot of work to do. I had a folder of new tunes for consideration, not all of them worked and I did write a tune or two as we were recording the album. The tunes that didn't make it to *Moyola Cottage* hopefully aren't lost forever. There are some pretty old tunes on the album too, one or two I'd originally composed about 10 years ago. You just have to find the right mix for them."

Moyola Cottage has a deeper personal significance for Damian. "The cottage is in Newbridge, South Derry and just beside the Moyola River. It's near the famous USAF airstrip that was built during the Second World War. The Cottage had been in my wife's family for generations; the house now is a rebuild on the old footprint, and we've been living here for the past number of years."

Many of the tunes on *Moyola Cottage* are connected to Damian's family and friends. *Bridged* refers to Bridge Road in

Dunloy where Damian grew up and Newbridge, where he now lives. There are references to family members: *The Bluffer* (a set of jigs) and *The Brophy Girls* are named after nieces and nephews and *Big Red Joe* set comprises of a jig, reel and a polka, named after his Godchildren. *Skinny Mick's Fort* is named for Liam Bradley, a nickname bestowed on him by a friend from County Tyrone. "The fort is where Liam lives and where we recorded the album." And, obviously *Moyola Cottage*, a slow air inspired by his home house.

There's some biting wit in a couple of the names too. "The second part of the opening track is called *Shorty Banjo*. I met a

Eamon Murray, Paul O'Donnell and Damian's wife Maureen McKee (who plays whistles on three tracks).

"Having those people with me on this album was very special. Liam was exceptional, he produced and engineered the album as well as arranging the tunes. Niall Hanna who is a great friend and along with his wife Rachel, were a must for the album - I love the way Niall plays guitar. He brings in a Jim Murray vibe to the tunes and Rachel has such a beautiful touch on the fiddle."

Both Damian and Niall have each released new albums this year. "Niall's new album *The Roving Journeyman* is a stunning piece of work, and I was delighted we could do a joint launch

"Passing on the tradition to young people is one of the most rewarding things you can do in Irish music"

friend in a pub at home in Dunloy. He sort of knew I played music in a band but didn't really know to what extent. He comes up to me and says, 'How you doing, Damian, are you still singing and playing the banjo?' You're never a hero in your own town." And what is the significance of the tune *Any Word Of Tommy*? Damian grew up playing hurling and Dunloy have always had quite a successful team. "Dunloy have reached the All Ireland hurling final on five occasions. The cup is called The Tommy Moore Cup. Unfortunately, Tommy hasn't made it this far yet!"

Moyola Cottage was very much a family and friends affair. Damian brought in Liam Bradley, Niall Hanna, Rachel McGarrity, Chris McGlone, Brona Graham, Anthony Davis,

tour together. We ran it with a big band and presented it as a concert with both of us on stage at the same time. We interlaced my tunes with Niall's songs, and it seemed to work nicely. It's certainly something we'd like to do together in the future."

The album is available on Bandcamp. "The best way to support musicians is to support gigs, buy their albums, whether it be physical copies or downloads," he says.

Moyola Cottage with its new tunes, a plethora of laid back slow numbers amid the lively jigs, reels and polkas, is a sure fire hit. It marks Damian out as a major contributor to the tradition he loves so much.

Go online for more at www.damianmckee.com

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THREE MAKE AN ODYSSEY

Seán Laffey talks to fiddler Tara Breen, concertina player Pádraig Rynne and guitarist Jim Murray about their new album, *Odyssey*.



Tara and Pádraig are from County Clare, Jim lives in Clonakilty, Cork, so my first question was how did they get together?

Tara: “Pádraig and I go back many years; we’d known each other from touring and recording sessions we shared as session musicians. We teach at Scoil Éigse annually and Kieran Hanrahan started grouping us together for performances, so he is central to the inception of this trio. Then fifteen years ago we performed at the *Riches of Clare* concert series and started playing in sessions together and it grew from there. Pádraig and I are also members of the Irish band NOTIFY.”

Pádraig: “Tara and I were making a duet album (Nasc, 2021). We were discussing guests for the accompaniment section. There wasn’t really any discussion, it was obvious that Jim was the perfect match on guitar. His musicality and in particular his dynamical approach is from the same canvas as Tara and I. We called him with the proposal, and he had no hesitation in joining us.”

Jim: “I’ve been playing guitar in traditional groups for thirty years now. I suppose Tara and Pádraig knew what they were letting themselves in for.” (He laughs). “I’m lucky to have toured regularly with the likes of Séamus Begley and Sharon Shannon for that period of time but have also found time to work in other projects along the way. Creating this band and the new album is something we are very proud of musically and we love touring and playing together. We are great friends too which is an important ingredient.”

Pádraig: “We have been touring regularly with this band over the past three years and that gave us time to develop and try new material while on the road. A lot of the tracks from the album were premiered on our tour of Canada and the States before Christmas and on our European dates this year. The fact we had been playing them live meant we already had a strong idea of the productional approach when we entered the recording studio.”

I had to ask about the cover art, an impressive graphic by Ken Coleman.

Pádraig: “His work is astonishing; this is the second cover he’s created for us. He teaches at TUS Clonmel and his work is an amazing mix of traditional techniques and digital creations. He is well worth seeking out online to see more.”

I chose four tracks to quiz the trio on: *Odyssey*, *Palmira*, *The Room In Darkness* and *Begley’s*.

Pádraig: “*Palmira* is a slow melody from Asturias, learned from the band Llan de Cubel. It was written by Fernando Largo, who was considered one of the fathers of Asturian folk music. I suggested it to Tara and Jim and we developed our own arrangement and approach for it. The outro slips into 7/8 creating a nice link into the next track, *Mount levers*.”

The Room In Darkness composed by the great Aidan O’Rourke, is a melody which really got into my head. We recorded it in a little production room I have at home and started to work on the arrangement. By the time we got to the studio to record it, we got it in one take which is what you hear on the album. It’s a special sad melody, which we relieve by pairing it with a Michael McGoldrick composition called *Treasures Money Can’t Buy*, which is about the precious gift of music.”

I asked Jim about the set he calls *Begley’s*.

Jim: “I grew up in north Cork, in the heart of Sliabh Luachra. These tunes were in my bloodstream from early on. I toured with Séamus Begley for over 25 years, and this was one of the tunes we often performed together. Another tune from the region is *Cuz Teahan’s*; Pádraig learned it from the accordion player Dónal Murphy from Abbeyfeale on the Limerick side of Sliabh Luachra. Pádraig

“*The Room in Darkness* is a slow sad tune, we learnt it on a drive from Cork to Belfast”

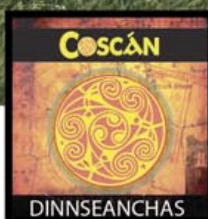
composed the final piece of the set while in the studio. *The Malbay Slide*, a nod to Malbay Studios where we recorded some of *Odyssey*.”

The album has been enthusiastically received, lauded for its musicianship and creativity, and the trio are looking forward to playing the album live. They have many concert dates between now and the end of the year in Ireland and the USA.

Listen to *Odyssey* on Bandcamp and find out more about the trio at www.breenrynemurray.com



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CELTIC COLOURS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL 2024

October 11-19 Cape Breton

Seán Laffey asks Dawn Beaton, the Artistic Director of Celtic Colours, “what’s in store at this year’s edition?”



Autumn in Cape Breton delivers a vibrant burst of red, orange and yellow on its maple-clad hillsides and equally vibrant Celtic music in many communities scattered across the island.

Celtic Colours 2024 will feature artists from Scotland, Ireland, the U.S., and Galicia, as well as all ten Canadian provinces. International performers Archie Fisher, John Doyle, The Dublin Trio, Dirk and Amelia Powell, Anna Massie, Cathy Ann MacPhee, Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, and Breabach will share stages with their counterparts from across Canada, including Jim Payne and Fergus O’Byrne, Rum Ragged, The Once, Richard Wood, Ray Legere, Genticorum, Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers, and Alex Kusturok.

Seán: “Can you tell us a little about the opening show “Let’s Go Up Home Tonight”, who is curating it and what does the phrase signify?”

Dawn Beaton: “The 28th Festival opens at the Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre with *Let’s Go Up Home Tonight*, a phrase that stems from the original theme music and lyrics of the much beloved ATV production *Up Home Tonight* hosted by Gordon Stobbe. The artists appearing at this Celtic Colours show have performed on the original TV show, just a small few given the life of that production. The show was known for its weekly high calibre casting that truly reflected the Maritime musical scene from various genres of Celtic to Bluegrass to folk, and always prioritizing various forms of dance on every show.”

Seán: “Irish readers will be interested in The Dublin Trio, featuring Kevin Conneff, Tony Byrne, and Joe McKenna.”

Dawn: “The Dublin Trio certainly reflects the pure drop Irish music and culture that have graced the Celtic Colours stages from day one. Audiences will see them on their own and collaborating with various artists across their time at the festival.”

Seán: “Can you tell us about the Mi’kmaq fiddler Lee Cremo and the legacy concert you will be putting on in his memory?”

Dawn: “Lee had a tremendous impact on the vibrancy of the fiddle culture here on Cape Breton Island from an extremely early age. He carved out a style that was distinct, that was his own, that had a flair that

permeated his fiddle style and his tune composition. The afternoon in Eskasoni will be a reflection on his impact these 25 years since his untimely passing, a message to his family and his community that his works are never forgotten, and a chance to see his impact on current violinists of the day, especially from our Mi’kmaq communities.”

Seán: “Could you tell us something about “Never Say Farewell: A Tribute to Tara Lynne”?”

Dawn: “Tara Lynne Touesnard is another example of a person that made the most of their short life with tremendous impact. She was able to produce three albums before reaching the age of 22 and was working on her fourth that particular winter back in 1994 when she died in an auto-accident. The festival endeavours to recognise artists, culture bearers and events that have made Cape Breton stand apart through its musical legacy and heritage, and it’s incumbent upon us to remember those that have come before us and before the festival, to recognise those with incredible abilities that make Cape Breton, Cape Breton.”

Seán: “I see you will be honouring a man who can be rightly called a living legend of Cape Breton song, Buddy Mac Donald.”

Dawn: “Buddy was and is a big part of the festival and the fabric that he helped to weave into the fall schedule of Cape Bretoners and visitors alike. As host of the Festival Club and featured festival performer since day one in 1997, Buddy’s songs have become instant hits everywhere he goes, which includes Denmark and Scotland and beyond the shores

“Pure drop Irish music and culture have graced the Celtic Colours stages from day one”

of Cape Breton. We’re so happy to make a big splash celebrating Buddy this year just down the road from his home. It will be a special night with a little surprise to say thank you to our dear Buddy.”

Celtic Colours runs for nine exhilarating days and wraps up in Sydney at Centre 200 with an impressive lineup for The Grand Finale featuring Galician piper Carlos Nùñez, Scottish Gaelic songstress Julie Fowlis, fast-rising Canadian fiddle star Mary Frances Leahy, the award-winning Cape Breton Island Pipe Band, and The Dublin Trio.

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EMER DUNNE : RUNNING BACK TO YOU

Singer Emer Dunne has enjoyed great success since her first album was released in 2021 - she has just issued a new single *Running Back To You* and as Mark Lysaght discovers, her future looks bright!



Photo : Terry Conroy

Mark: "It's been three years since your debut recording *Hourglass*, can you share some highlights that followed from its success?"

Emer: "The past few years since releasing *Hourglass* have been filled with unforgettable highlights. As an artist, to receive such wonderful reviews and hear my songs on various radio stations in Ireland and overseas has been both exciting and validating. Touring post-pandemic was especially rewarding with successful headline tours across Ireland.

A particularly touching moment was when I received a letter from a fan recovering from long COVID, who said my songs were helping him through a tough time. Visiting him in hospital and hearing how much my music meant to him was humbling. I've had the pleasure of joining The Fureys on their 2023 and 2024 Irish tours, singing in some of Ireland's most prestigious venues including Vicar Street, The INEC Killarney, Cork Opera House, Wexford Opera House and more. Most recently, I had the honour of opening for The High Kings in Australia."

Mark: "What first attracted you to music and performance as a child?"

Emer: "My love for Irish and folk music was sparked by my grandparents and parents. My grandfather played the accordion and sang, while my mother took me to piano and Irish dance classes. During my teens I got to travel across Europe and Japan as a singer and dancer with an Irish dance troupe, performing to audiences as large as

15,000. This incredible experience confirmed my love for the stage, ensuring that performing would always be a huge part of my life."

Mark: "You've teamed up again with Bill Shanley for the new single; what is it like to work with him?"

Emer: "Bill Shanley is an incredibly talented musician and guitarist as well as a gifted producer. I was thrilled to work with him again on the new track. I knew I could easily convey my vision to Bill, and he would help bring the song to life."

Mark: "Who are your musical heroes and heroines?"

Emer: "I admire Christy Moore and Paul Brady for their powerful voices and storytelling ability, Mary Black's blend of the traditional and contemporary. The Fureys hold such a special place in my heart, alongside The Dubliners, The Clancys and many more. Additionally, Simon and Garfunkel, Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen and Sinéad O'Connor's work have left a deep impact on me."

Mark: "How do you manage all the demands on your time?"

Emer: "Honestly, it's a real challenge because there are so many aspects to work on alongside the music itself – work on touring, websites, social media, videos etc., but I am learning so much as I go along and trying to enjoy each step along the way."

Mark: "What are your plans for the rest of 2025 and into next year?"

Emer: "In September my new single was released and hopefully I will have another one again before Christmas. I have some very exciting shows coming up with my band this autumn and I'm hoping to have many more gigs at home and overseas in 2025."

Mark: "Any advice for aspiring singers?"

Emer: "Stay true to your passion, focus on developing your voice and style, and don't be afraid to take some risks! Loving being on stage means embracing a lot of hard work behind the scenes, so be sure you love it enough. Although my family are musically inclined, none of them were working in the industry, so I've had to learn a lot on my own.

"Stay true to your passion, focus on developing your voice and style, and don't be afraid to take some risks!"

It's important to remember why you want to be a singer and to enjoy the successes along the way."

Mark: "Can you tell me about the new song?"

Emer: "My new single *Running Back to You* was penned by Irish songwriters, Matt McGinn and Brigid O'Neill. It's an optimistic love song that explores the challenges a couple face in their relationship, yet their hearts always find a way back to each other. I hope your readers enjoy the track, and if they do, it is now available on their preferred platform - iTunes, Spotify, Amazon music. I would also love for people to connect with me online!"

For further information, join Emer on www.emerdunne.com or say hello on her social media platforms! – Instagram and TikTok @emerdunnesinger and Facebook @emerdunnesingerofficial

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MUSIC AND HEALING

In Part 9 of the series, Bruce S. Victor MD, DLFAPA discusses Studies in Rhythm and Healing with a focus on Irish Set Dancing for Parkinson's and Dementia.

Kieran Jordan



Photo: Dylan Ladds

I began medical school at the University of Michigan in the fall of 1976, the same year Madonna started in the School of Dance. We never met. At that time, the two schools were quite far away from one another, a perfect metaphor for how dance and medicine were maintained at a considerable conceptual difference from one another for centuries.

However, on a June night in County Clare, an Italian neurologist, Dr. Daniele Volpe, walked into a pub with his friend, Charlie Piggot, one of the founding members of De Dannan, to play some music. In addition to being the Chief of the Parkinson Rehabilitation at the St. John of God Hospital in Venice, Dr. Volpe loved Irish traditional music and

the project entitled “Some Dance to Remember”, led by Seán Dónal O’Shay and colleagues at Technological University of the Shannon Midwest, as well as the studies of H.H. Kalyani and colleagues at Queensland University of Technology in Australia. These researchers reported that dance therapies produced important gains in mood and cognition that were not present when these therapies were not a regular part of treatment.

So what’s going on here? Given my woeful lack of dancing instruction in medical school, I consulted my dear friend, Kieran Jordan, about whom the *Irish Voice* said: “besides being a talented and inventive dancer...she has a keen academic interest in Irish dance history and evolution...” Even further, she is now a Board-Certified Polarity Practitioner.

“All of Irish dancing, whether that’s step dancing, sean-nós, céilí, or set dancing,” said Kieran, “involves *patterns*, which are matched to very structured and patterned melodies. The basic footwork in set dancing is a repeated 123-123 for most of the dance figures, shifting weight on each count or step.” But in contrast to step-dancing, which is done solo, Kieran said that “the partnering in set dancing is an important part of why set dancing works well with Parkinson’s. The dancer has someone to hold onto, for balance, and steering. In group dancing, the patterns are not just within the rhythmic footwork, but also in the shapes the dancers create around the floor. A good partner makes all the difference.”

But Kieran continued: “But deeper than all of that, I believe that rhythmic movement and patterning is regulating for the nervous system.

“A good partner makes all the difference”

made frequent visits to Ireland to play. When the set-dancing started, Dr. Volpe saw a man with the slow, tentative gait characteristic of Parkinson’s Disease join the dancers; and then watched in amazement when all indications of debility seemingly vaporised as he danced.

Dr. Volpe returned to Venice determined to answer the question of whether Irish set dancing could be useful in the treatment of Italian patients with Parkinson’s Disease. He then conducted a study of 24 subjects with moderate stage Parkinson’s symptoms and divided them into two groups: the first group was the “control group”, who received only conventional physiotherapy; the second group received the conventional therapy and instruction in Irish set dancing. The clinical evaluation that followed demonstrated *that the group that received instruction in Irish set dancing improved considerably more than the control in every measurement category.*

Parkinson’s Disease contains other risks beyond the obvious motor symptoms, such as cognitive decline to the point of outright dementia as well as similarly debilitating levels of anxiety and depression. Further studies of patients with Parkinsonism who were instructed in Irish set dancing demonstrated marked improvement in selected cognitive skills (executive function and episodic memory) and marked reductions in depression and anxiety, when compared with those without this instruction.

Those findings would suggest that Irish set dancing would have applicability in the treatment of dementia, irrespective of the presence of a movement disorder. And this was indeed shown to be the case by

Look at any indigenous culture where drumming and dancing, in community, play a role in ceremony or healing. Rhythmic movement makes us feel better.”

Kieran’s perspective dovetails not only with that of Dr. Volpe but also with an emerging medical perspective that views human physiology as a series of rhythmic systems. Not only do arrhythmic hearts not work well, but hormones secreted out of rhythm result in severe medical and psychological compromise. There is now a Section on Circadian Rhythms at the National Institute of Mental Health, colloquially referred to as their “Rhythm and Blues” section.

By the way, the Schools of Medicine and Dance are also now much closer geographically at the University of Michigan....



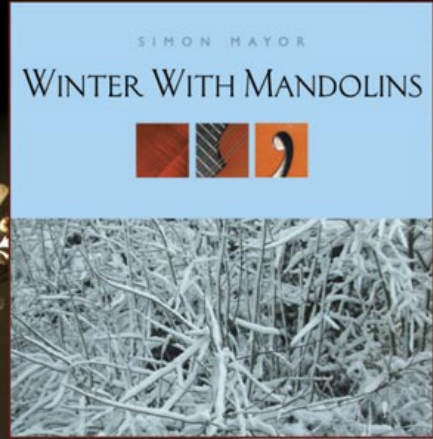
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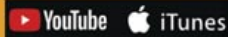


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Paddy Cummins, OAIM banjo and mandolin tutor has recently been busy recording practice backing tracks for our 1000+ lessons, making sure each tune on every course taught at OAIM has an accompanying play along practice track.

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“Choose from three different tempos, turn up your speakers or headphones and simply play along!”

Those of you familiar with Paddy's music will be delighted to hear of his debut solo album named “Irish Traditional Music from South West Drimnagh” by “Paahto” Cummins. It comprises of music played on the tenor banjo with no accompaniment or guest musicians. Paddy steers away from the banjo's lively, driving character and instead plays a more sensitive and subdued style. Ornamentation is sparse and only included with considerable deliberation and intent whilst paramount importance is put on melody, feeling and phrasing. This solo effort is an honest statement from Paahto and one which delivers banjo music in an alternative package. Check out Paddy's new project on Bandcamp.

So if you are ready to bring your playing up to the next level, and enjoy your practice sessions in a new and innovative way, Check out these new tracks at OAIM.

To learn more about OAIM's Practice Backing Tracks learning tool, Go here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hjbb_oL8gpw

SOME NEW FAVOURITE PLAY ALONG BACKING TRACKS TO JAM ALONG WITH

Boys of the Lough	Pearl O'Shaughnessy's Barndance
Boys of Malin	Pigeon on the Gate
Buachaill On Eirne	Roddy McCorleys
Comb Your Hair and Curl It	Sailing into Walpoles March
Congress Reel	Sean Reid's Reel
Dalaigh's Polka	Si Beag Si Mor
Danny Ab's Slide	Spanish Lady
Dingle Regatta	Sweet Marie
Dublin Reel	Tamlin
Gallaghers Frolics	The Bag of Spuds
Galtee Reel	The Crosses of Annagh
George White's Reel	The Fairy Slip Jig
Fairy Queen Hornpipe	The Humours of Ballyconnell
Fanny Power	The Otters Holt
Humours of Scarify	The Ten Penny Bit
James Mahon's Jig	The Musical Priest
Jim Donoghue's Reel	The Reconciliation
Kitty's Wedding	The Walls of Lis Carroll
Monaghan Twig	The Wind that Shakes the Barley
Musical Priest	Trip to Durrow
O'Keefe's Slide	Out on the Ocean

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galwaytradfest

Féile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe

November 11-17, 2024



Featuring : Concerts, Session Trails, Taster Sessions, Theatre & Masterclasses from amongst others Ryan Molloy, Edel Fox, Alan Doherty, Colm Phelan, Theresa O'Grady, Aisling Lyons, Tara Howley and Conor Connolly. **For more details** <https://galwaytradfest.ie/>



YOUR GUIDE TO GALWAY TRADFEST 2024

BRAND NEW GALWAY TRADFEST BY MUSIC GENERATION GALWAY COUNTY ANNOUNCED

The inaugural Galway TradFest, a new initiative by Music Generation Galway County, will take place across Galway from Monday 11th – Sunday 17th, November 2024.

Geata launch



The inaugural event will feature concerts, masterclasses in music, song and dance, a festival session trail, instrument taster sessions, theatre, showcase opportunities and a range of Irish traditional music activities which will give Galway's children and young people unparalleled access to high-level Irish traditional music opportunities at home in Galway.

While Galway is known the world over for its creative community and its noted exponents of Irish traditional music, song and dance, unlike many other counties it doesn't host an internationally recognised annual traditional music festival that embraces the County nor an extensive traditional music masterclass series in the manner that is now planned with Galway TradFest 2024. It is hoped that Galway TradFest and its educational programme (GEATA) will become an annual event which will be celebrated county-wide, and overtime attract visitors from across Ireland and the world.

The name 'geata'(gate/gateway) symbolises that what is planned, through high-level masterclasses, mentoring, instrument taster sessions, performances, theatre and other programme activities, will represent a gateway to access and opportunity for children and young people from Galway and also those visiting the area for the event.

Galway TradFest will comprise an eclectic concert programme featuring some of Ireland's leading exponents of traditional music, song and dance. Sharon Shannon, Beoga, Pauline Scanlon & Niall McCabe (amongst others) will all perform as part of 'Le Chéile' (Together) a 'We are Music Generation Youth Orchestra Concert' which will take place at University of Galway on November 16th.

Concerts at a variety of other venues will include performances from Iarla Ó Lionáird & Tim Edey, Máirtín O' Connor, Cathal Hayden & Seamie O Dowd, The Kane Sisters & John Blake, The Breath, Furry Village, The Half Room, Blath na hÓige, Tola Custy & Laoise Kelly, Niamh Ní Charra & Kevin Corbett, Ruth Smith & Fergal Scahill & guests, and a 'Livefeed' showcase concert which provides an opportunity for young bands & soloists to perform.

On the morning of November 17th more than 15 of Ireland's best known Irish traditional performers and tutors will deliver masterclasses to children and young people at Coláiste Bhaile Chláir in Galway's Gaeltacht region.

This comprehensive range of masterclasses includes tutors such as ALDOC's Alan Doherty (Flute), a sean nós singing workshop with Bláth na hÓige, Galway's Fergal Scahill mentoring on fiddle, alongside TG4 Gradam Ceoil Winners Ryan Molloy (accompaniment), Conor Connolly (accordion) & Sharon Howley (cello). Founder of trad supergroup Lúnasa, Trevor Hutchinson will provide a masterclass on accompanying trad music on double bass, while multi-instrumentalist Stephen Doherty from Foxford, Co Mayo will give a masterclass on how to record traditional Irish music.

Other tutors include Brendan Loughran & Edel Fox (concertina), Aisling Lyons (harp), Theresa O'Grady (Banjo), Tara Howley (uilleann pipes), Sinéad Mc Kenna (fiddle), Jos Kelly (accordion), Colm Phelan (bodhrán) and Richie Delahunty (guitar).

Workshops on Dance will be delivered by the renowned sean nós dancers The Devane Brothers & Emma O' Sullivan. Full details of these masterclasses are available at www.galwaytradfest.ie.

All of the above will operate in parallel with the Galway TradFest Session Trail across Galway City and in selected venues in County Galway.

Events as part of Galway TradFest and its educational programme (GEATA) will be produced with support from a variety of Music Generation Galway County's funding partners including Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRET, lead partner), Galway County Council, the Department of Education, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, U2, The Ireland Funds, the Arts Council/An Comhairle Ealaíon, Ealaín na Gaeltachta's Cuisle programme, Creative Ireland's Local Creative Youth Partnership, Galway Culture Company, University of Galway, Galway Rural Development, Foróige, Tusla/CYPSC, Involve, Youth Work Ireland (Galway), Forum Connemara CLG and TG4 amongst others.

Artistic Director of Galway TradFest is Music Generation Galway County's Music Development officer, Eric Cunningham:

"As part of our strategic plans to ensure the best outcomes for Galway's children and young



Eric Cunningham



For more details <https://galwaytradfest.ie/>

people where performance music education is concerned, we need to address the fact that when it comes to our Irish traditional arts, all too often too many of Galway's young performers must travel outside the County to access high-level tuition. With the advent of Galway TradFest and GEATA I envisage that this will change. We are looking forward to hosting a local annual event where Galway's young people will get to learn from visiting tutors and practitioners and indeed engage at home in Galway with young visiting performers with shared interests. Without the invaluable support of multiple partners and Project Manager Eamon Murray, these new initiatives simply wouldn't be possible."

Music Generation is a national partnership programme whose mission is to create inspiring experiences for children and young people through music. Music Generation Galway County delivers programmes to more than 4,000 students across Galway County on a continuing basis.

Galway Tradfest will take place at multiple locations across Galway from November 11th to November 17th, 2024.

Full details for all of the above to include, venues, ticket bookings, dates and times are available on www.galwaytradfest.ie and follow @galwaytradfest on social media channels, Facebook, X, Instagram and Youtube.

Imeacht Úrnu - Féile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe – fógartha ag Music Generation Chontae na Gaillimhe Dátaí don dialann: 11-17 Samhain 2024

Reáchtálfar an chéad eagrán d'Fhéile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe (Galway TradFest) – tionscnamh nua le Music Generation Chontae na Gaillimhe – idir an 11 agus 17 Samhain 2024.

Mar chuid den chéad imeacht seo dá shamhail, beidh ceolchoirmeacha, máistir-ranganna sa cheol, san amhránaíocht agus sa damhsa ar an sean-nós, cosán seisiún na féile, seisiúin do thosaitheoirí



Niall McCabe

Cuirfidh breis agus 15 de na ceoltóirí agus de theagascóirí ceoil thraidisiúnta na hÉireann is fearr aithne sa tír máistir-ranganna ar siúl ar maidin an 17 Samhain do leanaí agus daoine óga ag Coláiste Bhaile Chláir i réigiún Gaeltachta na Gaillimhe. I measc na dteagascóirí a sholáthróidh an réimse cuimsitheach seo de mháistir-ranganna, beidh Alan Doherty (an Fheadóg Mhór) le ALDOC, ceardlann amhránaíochta ar an sean-nós le Bláth na hÓige, Fergal Scahill de bhunadh na Gaillimhe, a dhéanfaidh meantóireacht ar an bhfidil, chomh maith le Buaiteoirí Ghradam Ceoil TG4, Ryan Molloy (tionlacan), Conor Connolly (an bosca ceoil) agus Sharon Howley (an dordveidhil). Cuirfidh bunaitheoir an tsárbhanna ceoil thraidisiúnta, Lúnasa, Trevor Hutchinson máistir-rang ar siúl maidir le ceol traidisiúnta a thionlacan leis an olddord, agus cuirfidh an ceoltóir ildánach Stephen Doherty ó Bhéal Easa, Contae Mhaigh Eo máistir-rang ar siúl maidir le conas ceol traidisiúnta na hÉireann a thaifeadh. I measc na dteagascóirí eile, beidh Brendan Loughran agus Edel Fox (an consairtín), Aisling Lyons (an chláirseach), Theresa O'Grady (an bainseó), Tara Howley (an phib uilleann), Sinéad McKenna (an fhidil), Jos Kelly (an bosca ceoil), Colm Phelan (an bodhrán) agus Richie Delahunty (an giotár). Cuirfidh na rincoirí cáiliúla ar an sean-nós, Gearóid agus Pádraig Ó Dubháin agus

“We are looking forward to hosting a local annual event where Galway's young people will get to learn from visiting tutors and practitioners...”

le triail a bhaint as uirlisí, amharclannaíocht, deiseanna sárthaispeántais agus neart imeachtaí eile. Cuirfidh an fhéile seo deiseanna ardleibhéil ceoil thraidisiúnta na hÉireann ar fáil do leanaí agus do dhaoine óga na Gaillimhe, deiseanna nach raibh ar fáil dóibh roimhe seo anseo i nGaillimh.

Cé go bhfuil cáil ar fud na cruinne ar Ghaillimh i ngeall ar a pobal cruthaitheach agus ar a máistrí móra ceoil, amhránaíochta agus damhsa thraidisiúnta, murab ionann agus contaetha eile, ní chuirtear féile cheoil thraidisiúnta bhliantúil ar siúl inti. Níl aon fhéile ar bun a dhéanann ceiliúradh ar an gcontae ina iomláine agus a leagann amach sraith fhairsing de mháistir-ranganna ceoil ar an mbealach atá beartaithe anois le Féile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe 2024. Tá síúil leis go ndéanfar imeacht bliantúil d'Fhéile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe agus den chláir oideachais (GEATA), a ndéanfar a cheiliúradh ar fud an chontae, agus a mheallfaidh cuairteoirí ó áiteanna ar fud na hÉireann agus an domhain le himeacht ama.

Tugann an t-ainm 'geata' an méid atá ar na bacáin le fios – idir máistir-ranganna ardleibhéil, meantóireacht, seisiúin cheoil do thosaitheoirí, léirithe, amharclannaíocht agus gníomhaíochtaí eile, agus feidhmeoidh siad mar gheata, nó bealach isteach chuig na gníomhaíochtaí, agus cuirfidh siad deis ar fáil do leanaí agus do dhaoine óga as Gaillimh agus dóibh siúd a bheidh ar cuairt sa cheantar freastal orthu.

Beidh clár ceolchoirmeacha ilghnéitheach ar siúl i rith Fhéile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe ina mbeidh roinnt de phríomh-mháistrí ceoil, amhránaíochta agus damhsa thraidisiúnta na hÉireann páirteach.

Beidh Sharon Shannon, Beoga, Pauline Scanlon agus Niall McCabe (i measc daoine eile) ag seinm mar chuid de 'Le Chéile' – Ceolchoirm Cheolfhoireann Óige 'Is Muide Music Generation' a bheidh ar siúl in Ollscoil na Gaillimhe ar an 16 Samhain. I measc na gceolchoirmeacha a bheidh ar siúl in ionaid eile, beidh Iarla Ó Lionáird agus Tim Edey, Máirtín O'Connor, Cathal Hayden agus Seamie O'Dowd, The Kane Sisters agus John Blake, The Breath, Furry Village, The Half Room, Bláth na hÓige, Tola Custy agus Laoise Kelly, Niamh Ní Charra agus Kevin Corbett, Ruth Smith agus Fergal Scahill agus aíonna ag seinm, agus cuirfeadh ceolchoirm sárthaispeántais 'Livefeed' ar siúl – tionscnamh is ea Livefeed a thugann deis do cheoltóirí óga seinm ina n-aonair nó mar chuid de bhanna ceoil.

Emma O'Sullivan, ceardlanna damhsa ar siúl. Tá sonraí iomlána ar fáil ar na máistir-ranganna ag www.galwaytradfest.ie.

Beidh na himeachtaí uile thuas ar siúl ag an am céanna le Cosán Seisiún Fhéile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe ar fud Chathair na Gaillimhe agus in ionaid áirithe i gContae na Gaillimhe.

Cuirfeadh imeachtaí mar chuid d'Fhéile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe agus den chláir oideachais (GEATA) ar siúl le tacaíocht ó chomhpháirtithe cistithe éagsúla Music Generation Chontae na Gaillimhe: Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna na Gaillimhe agus Ros Comáin (GRETB, an príomh-chomhpháirtí), Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe, an Roinn Oideachais, an Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán, U2, The Ireland Funds, an Chomhairle Ealaíon, Clár CUISLE Ealaíon na Gaeltachta, Comhpháirtíocht Áitiúil Óige Chruithaitheach Éire Ildánach, Comhlacht Cultúir na Gaillimhe, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe, Forbairt Tuaithe na Gaillimhe, Foróige, Tusla/CYPSC, Involve, Obair d'Ógra Éireann (Gaillimh), Fóram Chonamara CLG agus TG4, i measc eagraíochtaí eile.

Clár comhpháirtíochta náisiúnta é Music Generation arb é an misean atá aige ná eispéiris spreagúla a chruthú do leanaí agus do dhaoine óga tríd an gceol. Soláthraítear in Music Generation Chontae na Gaillimhe clár do bhreis agus 4,000 scoláire ar fud Chontae na Gaillimhe ar bhonn leanúnach.

Reáchtálfar Féile Cheoil Thraidisiúnta na Gaillimhe in ionaid éagsúla ar fud na Gaillimhe ón 11 go dtí an 17 Samhain 2024.

Tá sonraí iomlána don mhéid thuas go léir, ionaid, áirithintí ticéad, dátaí agus amanna ina measc, ar fáil ag www.galwaytradfest.ie agus lean @galwaytradfest ar na meáin shóisialta, Facebook, X, Instagram agus YouTube.



For more details <https://galwaytradfest.ie/>

MASTERCLASS LINEUP

An acclaimed line up of Teachers have been assembled for Geata 2024



Aisling Lyons - Harp

Aisling Lyons, multi-award winning harper, concertina player & composer from County Clare has been described as ‘..the finest young Irish harpist at work today.’ (Songlines Magazine) & ‘one of traditional music’s finest musicians’ (Hot Press Magazine 2022). She is multi-award winning & has toured internationally, teaching and performing at various festivals.

Aisling was nominated as ‘Best Folk Instrumentalist’ & ‘Best Emerging Artist’ at the 2022 RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards. She has recorded with ‘Merfolk’, ‘Harpanno’ & ‘3 on the Bund’ and has collaborated with Aideen Barry, Tolu Makay, Aindrias De Staic, RIIT Ḃ, Clare Sands, Stephen Shannon, Moya Cannon & Elle Máirjá Eira. Aisling graduated as a Professional Master of Music Education in 2021. Her debut album *Aistéar*, has been described as ‘an exceptional CD’ (the Living Tradition), ‘a standout record...flawless’ (Hot Press) & ‘excellent’ (Folk Radio UK).

Alan Doherty – Flute

Alan Doherty, a graduate of Ballyfermot College of Further Education, is a leading Irish flutist and co-founder of the acclaimed traditional groups Gráda and Aldoc and was the lead soloist on the *Lord of the Rings* soundtrack. Alan has recorded and produced albums for artists such as Christy Moore and Julie Fowlis, and regularly collaborates with leading Irish artists such as Damien Dempsey and Kíla. Alan is renowned for his unique and innovative style, with his arrangements, compositions, and live performances being central to his music.



Brendan Loughran - Concertina

Brendan Loughran, a celebrated concertina player was raised in a musical family immersed in Irish language and culture. His expertise also extends to the tin whistle, holding a Performance Diploma (DipLCM). Brendan’s upbringing in Belfast and the Gaeltacht region of Donegal deeply influenced his musical style, and he has toured internationally with dance shows and his former band ‘Athrú’. An

experienced teacher, Brendan has worked with the Glengormley School of Traditional Music, which was recognised for its ‘Outstanding Contribution to the Tradition’ at the Gradam Ceoil TG4 awards.



Colm Phelan – Bodhrán

Colm Phelan, hailing from Portlaoise, is a founding member of the renowned Trad supergroup “Goitse”. A master of the bodhrán, Colm has been a standout competitor in the All Ireland competition from a young age. His notable achievements include being the first-ever World Bodhrán Champion and winning the All Ireland in Letterkenny in 2006, both

for the second consecutive year. Colm holds a BA in Irish Music and Dance and an MA in Irish Music Performance from the University of Limerick. As a highly sought-after bodhrán tutor, Colm has led workshops worldwide and co-founded the International Bodhrán School “Búla Buzz” in 2016.

Conor Connolly – Accordion

Conor Connolly, the TG4 Ceoltóir Óg na Bliana for 2019, is a distinguished button accordion, piano player, and singer from Clarinbridge, Co. Galway. Growing up in a region rich with Irish musical heritage, Conor began playing the tin whistle at age 8 and transitioned to the accordion at 12, studying under Mary Murray and later at the Anne Conroy Burke and Joe Burke school of music. An accomplished singer and piano accompanist, he has performed with notable musicians including Frankie Gavin and Tony Linnane. Conor has conducted workshops and performed at major festivals worldwide, including Scoil Samhradh Willie Clancy, the Feakle International Music Festival, and the World Expo in Dubai.



Devane Brothers – Sean Nós Dance

The Devane Brothers are fifth-generation masters of sean-nós dance, an exquisite and deeply rooted art form in Irish culture. Hailing from a lineage

dedicated to preserving this traditional dance style, they are unparalleled in their expertise and commitment to its conservation and performance. With their rich heritage and unmatched skill, the Devane Brothers embody a legacy that spans generations, making them unique torchbearers of sean-nós dance in Ireland today.

For more details <https://galwaytradfest.ie/>



Emma O’Sullivan – Sean Nós Dance

Emma O’Sullivan, a native of Connemara, Co. Galway is renowned for her mastery of sean-nós dance. As an All-Ireland Champion, Emma has graced stages worldwide alongside leading figures in traditional Irish music. With over a decade of experience, she passionately shares this beautiful tradition through workshops and her acclaimed Sean Nós Irish Dance Classes. Emma’s captivating performances and viral Irish dance videos, viewed by over 20 million people globally, highlight her exceptional talent and dedication to promoting sean-nós dance.



educator from Renvyle, Connemara who holds first-class honours degrees from CSM, CIT (Bmus), and NUIG (MA). Specialising in concertina, whistle, guitar, ukulele, percussion, and voice, she actively contributes to Galway’s music scene through teaching and performing with local bands. As a choral director, Fionnuala leads ATU Voices Galway, Cór le Chéile, and Cór le Kids in Athenry, fostering community music participation. Rooted in a musical family, she honed her skills in Renvyle’s Comhaltas Seisiun and excelled in Fleadh competitions, earning RIAM gold medals and grade 8 distinctions in singing under Sr Karol O’Connell. Fionnuala is dedicated to music education, developing innovative programs that integrate folk songs and traditional Irish music in primary schools and after-school settings with Music Generation Galway County & City. Her tutoring focuses on concertina, voice, and whistle, inspiring young musicians across diverse musical genres and encouraging them to explore their creativity through music.



Fergal Scahill – Fiddle

Fiddler, Fergal Scahill began his musical journey at age two with the bodhran, captivating audiences by five in Galway’s Siamsa show. Over two decades, he’s earned numerous All-Ireland titles across instruments and groups. Fergal has collaborated extensively, recording five solo projects, two with Freewheel, and seven with We

Ita Geraghty – Session Tunes for beginners

Ita combines a background steeped in Irish traditional music with a keen interest in classical music and enjoys arranging and performing music which brings both genres together. Ita has won All-Ireland Fleadh titles on piano, fiddle and in accompaniment and has recorded and performed with a host of noted Irish traditional and Irish country artists. Ita is a

“Emma O’Sullivan, a native of Connemara, Co. Galway is renowned for her mastery of sean-nós dance”

Banjo 3. His “Tune a Day” project features over 1200 tunes with collaborations worldwide. As artist in residence at Scoil Acla in 2023 and instructor at Milwaukee Irish Fest and Brittany Winter School, he is committed to music education. Recognitions include Male Musician of the Year at the American Celtic Listener Supported Radio Awards (2020) and Album of the Year for *One Day :: November Woods* (2021). We Banjo 3, co-founded by Fergal, has garnered accolades like Traditional Album of the Year (Irish Times) and Best Folk Album (2018 RTÉ Folk Awards).

Fionnuala Hannigan-Dunkley – Introduction to Irish Music (U-12s)

Fionnuala Hannigan-Dunkley is a versatile musician and



member of Fiddlesticks; a group she joined as a student at University College Cork. The group recently reformed to



perform at Celtic Connections festival. She holds a Bachelors degree in Music & Irish and a Masters degree in Education. Ita has delivered various masterclass and workshops throughout Ireland and adjudicates at all levels of Fleadh Cheoil across the country. Ita teaches Music and Irish at Presentation College

Headford, she is currently resident conductor and arranger with Galway Traditional Orchestra and works as a Musician Educator with Music Generation Galway County.



For more details <https://galwaytradfest.ie/>



Jos Kelly – Accordion

Jos Kelly, a seasoned accordionist and piano player, discovered his passion for music at age eight, finding his true home on stage. He embodies pride and confidence in his music, both personally and with Alt-Folk band 'Moxie', where he serves as Composer, Arranger, and Performer. Jos has toured

globally with various music greats, but his dedication to 'Moxie' remains paramount. Jos's accolades include multiple 'All Ireland' medals and orchestral collaborations with RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra. His passion for music education and arrangement shines through his work with groups like 'Teaspach' and his commitment to pushing musical boundaries continues to inspire audiences worldwide.

Richie Delehunty – Guitar

Based in Cahir, Tipperary, Richie Delahunty is a versatile multi-instrumentalist specialising in banjo, mandolin, acoustic and electric guitars, and slide guitar. With accolades including All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil titles in mandolin and tenor guitar Richie is deeply committed to music performance, teaching,



and recording/session work. Since 2013 he has been a dedicated music teacher for Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, UCC workshops, Music Generation Cork, Ballyneety Music School, and Club Cheoil Ballyphehane. Notably, mentoring the Siansa Gael Linn group 'Lasrach' led to an All-Ireland victory. As a full-time musician since 2014, Richie has performed extensively including representing

Ireland as a musical ambassador at Expo 2020 Dubai, performing with 'Moxie' under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the National Concert Hall Dublin.

Ryan Molloy – Piano

Ryan Molloy is a composer straddling contemporary and traditional Irish music, renowned for his prowess as a fiddler and pianist. Over fifteen years, he has crafted over fifty compositions performed globally on four continents, featured prominently on BBC, RTÉ, and UTV. In 2024, Ryan received the prestigious TG4 Gradam Ceoil Composer of the Year award. His works have been commissioned by RTÉ, BBC, and esteemed ensembles like the Danish String Quartet and Ulster Orchestra. Ryan has represented Ireland at ISCM World New Music Days festivals and recorded extensively, earning

nominations in the RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards. His solo albums, including *pianophony* (2019) and *Tempered* (2021), showcase his innovative blend of uilleann pipes and piano. Ryan serves as Associate Professor of Composition at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth.



Sharon Howley – Cello

Sharon Howley, a distinguished cellist from Kilfenora, Co. Clare, has established herself as a prominent figure in Traditional Irish music. A multi-instrumentalist since childhood, Sharon excels as a performer, arranger, composer, and educator. She collaborates with various organisations and projects,



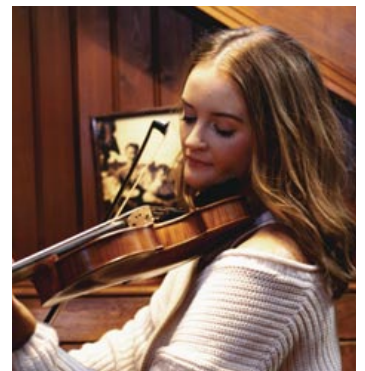
contributing to numerous albums spanning diverse musical genres. Sharon's membership in the prestigious Kilfenora Céilí Band underscores her expertise and commitment to traditional music. She holds two Masters degrees in music from the University of Limerick and achieved acclaim as Young Musician of the Year at the 2020 TG4 Gradam Ceoil

Awards. Sharon's versatile talent and extensive contributions to Irish music make her a sought-after presence both on stage and in educational settings, inspiring new generations of musicians worldwide.

Sinéad McKenna – Fiddle

Sinéad McKenna, a gifted fiddler and multi-instrumentalist from Augher, Co. Tyrone, is deeply rooted in Irish traditional music. Raised in a musical family with ties to North Monaghan, her playing reflects influences from fiddle masters Pete and Pat McKenna, alongside echoes of Tommy Peoples and Ed Reavy. Notable career moments

include performing at the Tommy Peoples Tribute Concert and headlining Belfast Tradfest and The Pádraig O'Keefe Festival. Recognized as an emerging talent, Sinéad has appeared on RTÉ, TG4, and BBC's "The Northern Fiddler". She holds multiple All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil medals and won



the prestigious Ed Reavy International Fiddle Competition in 2019. In 2022, she received the inaugural Belfast City Council Gradam Ceoil Bursary Award, enabling her to focus on composing, recording, and performing with esteemed musicians for her debut album.



For more details <https://galwaytradfest.ie/>



Stephen Doherty – Recording Traditional Irish Music

Stephen Doherty, hailing from Foxford, Co. Mayo, is a renowned multi-instrumentalist deeply rooted in Irish traditional music. From a young age, he excelled across instruments like whistle, bodhrán, accordion, and flute, accumulating

numerous All-Ireland medals, including two Melodeon championships and a senior flute title. Stephen embarked on his international music journey at 17, performing at the Cleveland Music Festival, followed by a year with FOM Productions in France and America. He later became the resident Traditional Irish Music Teacher at Mayo School of Music, instructing over 100 students weekly. His career blossomed through tours with Celtic Crossroads, Ragús, Slide, and Gráda, spanning 20 countries. Stephen released his debut duo album, *The Foxford Way*, and composed for *TitanicDance*, a globally touring Irish dance production. He appeared in Ken

number 9 on the iTunes Charts. With a significant online following, Tara engages over 193,000 followers across her social media platforms, continuing to inspire and innovate in traditional music.

Theresa O’Grady – Banjo

Theresa O’Grady, originally from Luton, England, grew up in a deeply musical family whose grounding in traditional music came from influential figures such as Anne Caulfield, Tommy Keane, Paddy Hayes, and Brian Rooney. Theresa was mentored by the exceptional banjo player and teacher, Annette Hannigan (Nee Caulfield). In 1997, Theresa relocated to Ireland where she married Declan Payne, a Sligo-born Piano Accordion player. Immersed in the infectious “Sligo Style”, Theresa has developed a distinctive, rhythmic, and ornamented banjo playing style, establishing herself as one of the finest banjo players of her generation. Her debut album, *BANJO’ista*, released in 2018, was eagerly anticipated and warmly received by the banjo community. Theresa is

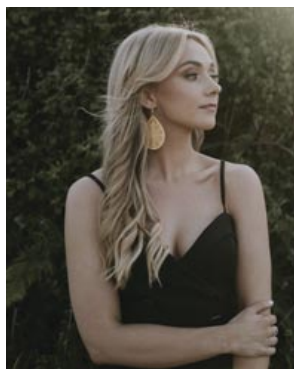


“Stephen Doherty, hailing from Foxford, Co. Mayo, is a renowned multi-instrumentalist deeply rooted in Irish traditional music”

Loach’s film *Jimmys Hall* and composed for the CRN Irish Dance World Championships. Stephen continues as a front-of-house sound engineer and tours with The Sean Keane Band and his ensemble Blás. His recent recordings include collaborations with Sean Keane, Nathan Carter, and Derek Ryan, showcasing his diverse musical talents and extensive contributions to the traditional music scene.

Tara Howley – Uilleann Pipes

Tara Howley from Kilfenora, Co. Clare, excels as a multi-award-winning instrumentalist, singer-songwriter, and composer. Tara spent 7 years as a lead performer in *Riverdance* captivating audiences worldwide, with extensive tours taking her across Europe, Asia, America, and Canada. Tara’s musical journey includes standout moments such as solo performances for Universal Music’s *Riverdance 25th Anniversary* album and DVD alongside the RTÉ Concert Orchestra. She has collaborated with acclaimed artists like the Grammy-nominated ‘Afro Celt Sound System’ and shared stages with legends such as Sir James Galway, Bill Whelan, Paddy Keenan, and Finbar Furey. Tara’s performances have been featured prominently on national and international TV, documentaries, and podcasts. In her solo career, Tara achieved notable success with an EP in collaboration with Malaysia’s Faliq Auri, reaching audiences in over 70 countries. Her recent single, *Outlawed Tunes on Outlawed*, made history as the sole female uilleann piper to reach



a full-time music teacher renowned for her expertise in traditional Irish music and the banjo. She is highly sought-after for workshops, seminars, and one-on-one lessons, with increasing demand for her online teaching services reaching students worldwide.

Trevor Hutchinson – Double Bass



Trevor Hutchinson, a founding member of Lúnasa, hails from Cookstown, County Tyrone, and is revered for his mastery of the double bass in traditional Irish music. He has enriched bands like The Waterboys and The Sharon Shannon Band with his rhythmic precision and melodic depth. Beyond performing, Trevor excels as a recording engineer and producer, capturing the essence of Irish music in acclaimed albums.

For more details and to book a Masterclass <https://galwaytradfest.ie/masterclasses-maistir-ranganna/>



For more details <https://galwaytradfest.ie/>



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BODHRÁN - COLM PHELAN | CELLO - SHARON HOWLEY | CONCERTINA - BRENDAN LOUGHRAN | CONSAIRTÍN (AS GAELIGE) - EDEL FOX | FIDDLE - FERFAL SCAHILL | FIDIL (AS GAELIGE) - SINÉAD MCKENNA
FLUTE - ALAN DOHERTY | GUITAR - RICHIE DELAHUNTY | HARP - AISLING LYONS | INTRODUCTION TO IRISH MUSIC - FIONNUALA HANNIGAN-DUNKLEY | PIPES - TARA HOWLEY
RECORDING WORKSHOP - STEPHEN DOHERTY | SEAN-NÓS DANCE - EMMA O'SULLIVAN | DAMHSA AR AN SEAN-NÓS (AS GAELIGE) - DEVANE BROS | SEAN-NÓS SINGING - BLÁTH NA HÓIGE
SESSION TUNES - ITA GERAGHTY | SETS/CÉILÍ - CHRISTY MAC GEARAILT

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FESTIVAL INTERCELTIQUE DE LORIENT 2024

Philippe Cousin reports that the world's largest Celtic festival was once again a series of superb encounters with youth to the fore.

Carlos Núñez



Photo : Philippe Cousin

Ever since 1971, the Festival Interceltique de Lorient (FIL) has been bringing the port city to life every August. This year, the dates and duration of the fifty-third edition of the festival were changed and limited to seven days. This in no way diminished the dynamism of the organising team, who put on another fine edition, offering festival-goers a host of quality events.

Concerts, competitions, parades, masterclasses, dance in all its forms, cinema, exhibitions - for a whole week, Lorient was the place

These young people were also honoured by the various concerts and performances featuring young artists on the festival's many stages.

Among the countless concerts, virtually all of which were sold out, was the Grande Nuit de l'Écosse, which welcomed two big names to the Theatre: the most Breton of Scots, Calum Stewart, followed by fiddler Duncan Chisholm. Then there were the Celtic Voices: Asturians Calea and Irish duo Zoë Conway (fiddle) and John Mc Intyre (guitar).

Sur les routes d'Écosse (On the Roads of Scotland), was another fantastic evening: which gave the very young fiddler prodigy Ryan Young the chance to show off his talent. In the second half of the evening, singer Julie Fowles offered us some superb songs in Gaelic and gave a brilliant demonstration of her dexterity on the tin whistle and bagpipes.

Talking of bagpipes, and we should as FIL was originally a piping festival, Gaïta master Carlos Núñez gave three concerts, all of which were sold out. The energy he displayed, as always, was proof of his excellence.

For the third year running, the Breton Ronan Le Bars orchestrated the Celtic Odyssey, an Interceltic creation featuring some fifteen musicians and singers. A spellbinding journey from Asturias to Galicia, from Brittany to Cornwall, from Wales to the Isle of Man, from Ireland to Scotland.

And then there was the Celtic Legends evening, where one of the world's greatest traditional flautists, Matt Molloy, one of only two surviving members of the Chieftains, gave us a concert of exceptional quality. He was followed by Cherish The Ladies.

“Matt Molloy...gave us a concert of exceptional quality”

to be for Intercelticism. Conviviality was the watchword everywhere at a festival that this year chose to focus on the youth of the Celtic countries, who were everywhere on the stages and in the aisles of the festival. It was the place to be for young people.

According to FIL's director, Jean-Philippe Mauras, the aim in 2024 was to “celebrate the potential of new talent, boost the artistic dynamism of emerging groups and organise meetings between young people from different nations to share their daily lives, encourage exchanges and build for the future.”

An Interceltic Music Camp brought together 16 young musicians, singers and dancers, 8 girls and 8 boys, 2 from each Celtic nation. Their mission, to take part in a week-long artistic residency before the festival; they were coached by two experienced Breton musicians. It's a bit like Bláth na hÓige. Under the guidance and wise counsel of their mentors, they pooled their respective music and collectively put together a repertoire, which they then presented to the public, playing several times a day on the festival's various stages.

An absolute success, if the applause that greeted each performance is anything to go by. I'd just like to mention the two Irish musicians from Donegal, Nia Ní Beirne (fiddle and vocals) and Caoilte Ó Cunaigh (guitar, mandolin and uilleann pipes). Nia is the daughter of Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh and Dermot Byrne, while Caoilte is the son of Steve Cooney and Laoise Kelly.

Young people were also represented by 60 young Breton dancers who performed several times, notably during the Horizons Celtiques evenings, a big night-time show presented at the stadium.

There were also evening concerts by Breton bands Soldat Louis and Matmatah. They were preceded by the Welsh musicians of NoGood Boyo, a little crazy and the dynamic Irish band Seo Linn. And let's not forget the Grand Parade of Celtic Nations, which drew 92,000 spectators.

Just in case you ever doubted the scale of FIL, here are the figures: the 2024 edition of FIL welcomed over 650,000 visitors. More than 160,000 tickets and badges were sold, and 1 million people watched the Grand Parade on French television.

The dates for the 2025 edition are already known: from 1 to 10 August 2025 with Les Cousins d'Amérique (American cousins). The full FIL programme will be announced on 27 March.

Caoilte Ó Cunaigh



Photo : Philippe Cousin

MEET THE RADIO PRESENTER

Sharon Iberle of *Ireland Tonight* in Chicago in conversation with Robert Heuston for Irish Music Magazine.



sure that it is what I like and hopefully what my listeners like. I do a little research on each band and musician and try to provide the listeners with some information about them.

Depending upon the time of year, I add music that pertains to holidays or important historical events.

When I hear of a new album, I reach out to the musician and ask for an interview. The interviews are done via a telephone call and recorded to be played on both *Ireland Tonight* and *Sessiuns from the Cottage*.

Robert: Which Irish Traditional and Folk musicians have made a significant impact on your life?

Sharon: There are many musicians that have made an impact on what I do. Jimmy Keane, Paddy Homan, Katie Grennan and Liz Carroll are only a few that come to mind. They are an incredibly talented group of people that truly care about the music and want to make a difference. Watching them and listening to them makes me want to do a better job – to provide the best possible music to the new and old listeners of Irish Traditional Music. They are truly kind, helpful and are the real deal. No agendas here, just great people doing what they love to do and setting examples along the way.

Robert: What does being a custodian of the Irish Music Tradition mean to Sharon Iberle?

Sharon: Providing Traditional Irish Music ensures that the Irish culture lives on. A tapestry of traditional Irish music provides the listener with a variety of tunes and songs that tell the stories of long ago and thereby keeping the Irish Music Tradition alive as well as providing historical information.

Robert: Can you tell our readers a little about Sharon Iberle and your background in Irish Music and broadcasting?

Sharon: My parents, Gene & Rose Smith were from Ireland. My father was from Co. Monaghan and my mother was from Co. Tyrone. From an early age I can remember that on Saturday morning the 'Irish Hour' was on the radio. Irish Hour meaning from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. My parents would have parties and everyone that came were from Ireland and once the party started, the guests would either sing a song, play a tune or do a recitation. I remember that there was always music, and where there was music, there was laughter.

I began my working career as a teacher for the Archdiocese of Chicago and after a number of years I went to work for IBM. I really do not have any formal broadcasting training. My friend, the late Maryann McTeague Keifer taught me so much about the *Ireland Tonight* radio show.

Robert: What's involved in preparing your show each week?

Sharon: The purpose of *Ireland Tonight* is to bring great Irish music to our listening audience. I try to focus on bringing new musicians and their music to our listeners as well as music from musicians that are incredibly talented and have been around for a number of years. I try to bring a mix of new and old. I select the tunes and songs, but before I actually put them on my playlist, I listen to every tune and song to make

"I remember that there was always music, and where there was music, there was laughter"

What I see today is that there are musicians that bring out tunes and songs from the 1800's and 1900's and I am so privileged to be able to play them on the radio. Music tells a story and the story provides us with a glimpse of what happened during that particular timeframe.

Traditional Irish Music makes us feel good. Music helps us get through the tough obstacles that get in our way, and music forms a bond with others that you may not have met before. Music provides a glimpse of history – present and past and keeps alive important events. Where there is music there is laughter.

Robert: What emerging Irish Artists would you like to see Stateside in 2025?

Sharon: The Friel Sisters, O'Jizo, Enda Scahill & Gadan, and Conor Mallon.

For more details: Sharon Iberle email – dooskymill@comcast.net

Ireland Tonight – wdcb.org

Sessiuns from the Cottage – Global Irish Radio – gir.ie

Sharon's Trad Picks – Global Irish Radio – gir.ie

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RETURN TO LONDON TOWN 2024
FRIDAY 25TH - MONDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2024
LONDON'S 26TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF
TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC, SONG AND DANCE

Featuring : The Bonny Men, Laoise Kelly, Josephine Marsh, Doireann Ní Ghlacáin, Tony Linnane, Éamonn O'Riordan and Conor Connolly, Brogan and Órlaith McAuliffe, Garadice, The Weaving, Caitlín and Ciarán and much more.....



IMDL
IRISH MUSIC AND
DANCE IN LONDON

Photo : Marianne Mangan

CELEBRATING THE BEST IN MUSIC & CULTURE

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**LONDON'S 26TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF
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The Weaving | Parish Céilí Band | Philippe Barnes and Tom Phelan |
The Trad Gathering and more.

For full Festival and other event details plus information on how to
purchase tickets see:

www.returntolondontown.org and www.irishmusicinlondon.org

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WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Karen Ryan



Photo : Grant Burchill

We are very excited to be opening our doors to London's 26th annual Festival of traditional Irish music, song and dance 'Return to London Town' (RtLT) in a part of London with huge historical links to the Irish diaspora experience in this city – Cricklewood and Kilburn.

Four days of the finest music, song and dance, hosting 55 scheduled events across 8 spaces at the beautiful Crown Hotel, plus 6 other local venues. There will be the usual mix of concerts, céilís, workshops, sessions, album launches and a quiz. Our events are a mixture of free entry and ticketed and our all-weekend ticket is a real bargain at just £45. There really is something for everyone.

For the first time, RtLT will be collaboratively hosting an acoustic music and film screening night at The Kiln Theatre in Kilburn (Mon 28 Oct, 7pm). The night will feature RTÉ TG4's London edition of 'Ceolairacht' (Musical Wanderings) which shines a light on some of the history of the Irish community in London, and some of our musicians here now. The screening will be introduced by the programme's presenter Doireann Ní Glacháin.

Musicians, singers, dancers and dedicated followers of traditional Irish culture are spread far and wide throughout the sprawling metropolis that is London Town. Each year, RtLT is a wonderful opportunity to bring these people together in one place over one long weekend. It is also a chance to showcase Irish traditions and the warmth of our people to the wider community who have also made London their home.

London's multicultural landscape offers a window on the world where we can experience the finest in arts, culture and more from just about every nation. We are proud to stand tall, celebrating and sharing our own Irish culture and traditions.

The London Irish music community has had a strong presence since the middle of the last century. Irish emigrants spend time in London, some settling, some passing through – returning home or emigrating elsewhere after a while. Those who pass through still feel part of the scene here and often enjoy the chance to 'Return to London Town' to reconnect. Those who settle, often go on to raise families here, passing on the love of Irish culture and traditions, and proud sense of being Irish to the next generations.

The Irish music scene is extremely buoyant here at the moment, with over 40 regular sessions across the city, often bringing people together from different generations. Many of these regular sessions

are led by young Irish emigrants and young 2nd and 3rd generation Irish musicians – all contributing equally in this wonderful community.

Music classes for children and adults across the city are attended by more than 400 students. Of course you don't have to be Irish to enjoy Irish culture. We are very proud that a number of regular session players and people attending Irish music classes in London have no Irish family connections, but are captivated by Irish cultural traditions and have chosen to immerse themselves in the music, song, dance and community.

IMDL (Irish Music and Dance in London) is delighted to host events at various points throughout the year, celebrating community and culture whilst also maintaining a high profile for our community here in multicultural London. This improved visibility of the Irish traditional music, song and dance community in London helps those new Irish emigrants who want to find us. We also hope that it helps more people who perhaps might not otherwise find us, to enjoy experiencing our community and culture.

This year's Festival line-up features a wonderful mix of visiting artists from Ireland (25 in total) as well as Irish artists based here in London. Our impressive line-up for 2024 includes: The Bonny Men / Laoise Kelly and Josephine Marsh / Tony Linnane, Éamonn O'Riordan and Conor Connolly / Garadice / Doireann Ní Glacháin, Órlaith and

“Musicians, singers, dancers and dedicated followers of traditional Irish culture are spread far and wide throughout the sprawling metropolis that is London Town”

Brogan McAuliffe / Aoife Ní Bhráin / The Weaving / Parish Céilí Band / Philippe Barnes and Tom Phelan / The Trad Gathering and more.

It has been an absolute pleasure to witness our newly expanded IMDL team really start to come into their own as they take on new responsibilities within the organisation. I would like to thank you all and look forward to working together even more in the future.

We are extremely grateful to our funders, sponsors and media partners for making everything possible - Emigrant Support Programme, Culture Ireland, Irish Youth Foundation, Ireland Funds of Great Britain, Flannerys, Embassy Demolition, Ardmere, The Irish World and The Irish Post. We would like to thank all our venue partners for hosting our Festival events – The Crown Hotel (AG Hotels), Ashford Place, St Agnes Parish Centre, The Kiln Theatre, Barrett's, Lucky Seven and Sir Colin Campbell.

Full details of our jam-packed 4 day Return to London Town Festival programme are available in the pages ahead and at www.returntolondontown.org

At the time of going to print, a limited number of discounted rooms for Festival goers are available to book at The Crown Hotel. We look forward to welcoming you all for another great weekend.

Looking forward to seeing you in London.

Karen Ryan
Festival Director

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LONDON TOWN 2024
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TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC, SONG AND DANCE

IMDL
IRISH MUSIC AND
DANCE IN LONDON

RETURN TO LONDON TOWN FESTIVAL 2024

Irish Traditional Music will be alive and well in London with another stellar offering.



Ciarán Ó Maonaigh
and Caitlín Nic
Gabhann

Schedule

Return to London Town Festival 2024 Programme: Friday 25th – Monday 28th October 2024

Friday 25th October 2024

Various sessions at The Crown and Lucky Seven (free)

7.30pm - Evening Concert: **Tony Linnane, Éamonn O'Riordan and Conor Connolly/ Garadice / The Trad Gathering (£22.50/ £7 U18s)**

Saturday 26th October 2024

Various sessions at The Crown and Lucky Seven (free)

11am-1pm: Instrumental/ Singing/ Dancing Workshops (£12.50/ £7 U18s)

Flute: **Éamonn O'Riordan**, Fiddle: **Tony Linnane**, Banjo: **Theresa O'Grady**, Tin Whistle: **Órlaith McAuliffe**, Concertina: **Paul Clesham**, Accordion: **Conor Connolly**, Uilleann Pipes: **Maitiú Ó Casaide**, Harp: **Laoise Kelly**, Strings Accompaniment: **Adam Whelan**, Bodhrán: **Conor Lyons**, Sean Nós Singing: **Róisín Chambers**

1.30-3.30pm: Piano accompaniment (bring your own keyboard): **Paul Clesham**

1.30pm: Children's Ceili Dancing Workshop: **Anne Drury**

2pm - Afternoon Concert: **Caitlín Nic Gabhann and Ciarán Ó Maonaigh/ Aoife Ní Bhráin/ Doireann Ní Glacháin, Brogan and Órlaith McAuliffe (£12.50/ £7 U18s)**

3pm: Tutor Led Session: **Laoise Kelly, Josephine Marsh, Peter McAlinden (Free)**

4-7pm: Set Dancing Céilí: **The Parish Céilí Band**, with host: **Tom Kelleher (£13/ accompanied children free)**

6pm: Singing Session: **Jackie Quirke** with guest: **Doireann Ní Glacháin**

7.30pm: Evening Concert: **The Bonny Men / The Weaving / Laoise Kelly (£22.50/ £7 U18s)**

Sunday 27th October 2024

Various sessions at The Crown and Barrett's (free)

11am-1pm: Instrumental/ Singing/ Dancing Workshops (£12.50/ £7 U18s)

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DANCE IN LONDON

Flute: **Dave Sheridan**, Fiddle: **Turlough Chambers**, Uilleann Pipes: **Pádraig McGovern**, Concertina: **Caitlín Nic Gabhann**, Accordion: **Josephine Marsh**, Banjo: **Mick O'Connor**, Tin Whistle: **Moss Landman**
1.30-3.30pm: Singing in Harmony: **Natalie Ní Chasaide and Róisín Chambers**

1.30-3.30pm: Children's Singing Workshop: **Chan Reid** (young group 2-3pm, older group 3-4pm)

2-5pm: Set Dancing Céilí: **The Parish Céilí Band** with host: **Tom Kelleher (£13/ accompanied children free)**

3pm: Tutor Led Session: **Theresa O'Grady, Ciarán Ó Maonaigh, Peter McAlinden**

5pm: Quiz with host **Mick Mulvey (free)**

6pm: Singing Session Hosted by **Chan Reid** with guests **Méabh Ní Bheaglaioich, Cait Ní Ríain**

7pm: Album Launch Event: **Josephine Marsh** (Book launch) / **Philippe Barnes and Tom Phelan (free)**

8pm: Céilí For All with music by **McCool Trad**, dance calling by **Moirea Dempsey (£7)**

Monday 28th October 2024

2pm: Afternoon Concert: **Eleanor Shanley and John McCartin/ London Irish Pensioner's Choir / Laoise Kelly and Josephine Marsh (£12.50/ £7 U18s)**

7pm: Screening of TG4's '**Ceolairacht – Londain**' with **Doireann Ní Ghlacháin (free – including acoustic music, Kiln Theatre)**

Some Of Our Main Artists Include:

Legendary fiddler **Tony Linnane** was born into a musical family in Corofin, Co. Clare. He began on mouth organ before advancing to fiddle, becoming an accomplished player in early adolescence. Tony was a founder member of Inchiquin and released an iconic duet album with Noel Hill in 1979, still regarded as one of the finest traditional Irish music records. He has toured internationally, recorded extensively for RTÉ, and collaborated with many renowned musicians. In 2023, Tony released his critically acclaimed debut solo album, *Ceol na Fiddle*. At the festival, he will be joined by Éamonn O'Riordan (flute) and Conor Connolly (piano).

From Athea, West Limerick, **Éamonn O'Riordan** began playing tin whistle at six and took up the flute at eleven. He was influenced by great West Limerick musicians and Kerry music. Flute players who inspired Éamonn include Jack Dolan, Mick Woods, Tom Morrison and Eddie Moloney. Now residing in Ennis, he plays regularly with Tony

Doireann Ní Glacháin



Linnane and performs at festivals nationwide.

Conor Connolly is a button accordion, piano player and singer from Clarinbridge, Co. Galway. He started on tin whistle at eight, moving to accordion at twelve. It was hearing the music of Joe Cooley and other players such as Tony MacMahon, Fiachna Ó Mongáin and Eoin O'Neill, which led Conor to change from the conventional B/C style to the C#/D system. He received the TG4 Ceoltóir Óg na Bliana (Young Musician of the Year) Award in 2019 and has taught and performed internationally.

Garadice was born out of the Leitrim Equation Programme, a Leitrim Co. Council residency initiative focused on celebrating, promoting, and developing Leitrim artists. Named after a scenic area in South Leitrim and consisting of four artists with strong Leitrim roots, the band was described as an 'embryonic supergroup' by Alex Monaghan (Folkworld) following the release of their self-titled debut album in 2018. Their second album *Sanctuary* was released to high acclaim in September 2023 and the group were honoured with a nomination in the 'Best Folk Group' category at the 2024 RTÉ Folk Awards. Much of the repertoire on these recordings is from historic and recent sources connected to Co. Leitrim. Members include Eleanor Shanley (vocal), Dave Sheridan (flute, accordion), Pádraig McGovern (uilleann pipes, whistle) and John McCartin (guitar).

IMDL's London-wide youth project **The Trad Gathering** features 30 young traditional Irish musicians led by Karen Ryan and Pete Quinn. This evening, members of the group will play their debut performance of tunes from the repertoire of the legendary North Leitrim musician and teacher, Tommy Maguire.

Caitlín Nic Gabhann and Ciarán Ó Maonaigh: Raised in a house full of music in Co. Meath, concertina player, teacher, composer and dancer Caitlín Nic Gabhann learned most of her music from her father Antóin Mac Gabhann, a noted fiddler and fiddle teacher. As well as performing with the RTÉ Vanbrugh Quartet, Paddy Keenan, and Liam Ó Maonlaí, she has toured the world as a dancer with *Riverdance*. Her compositions have been performed in the Cork Opera House and The National Concert Hall, Dublin. Caitlín teaches concertina annually at summer and winter schools in Ireland, Europe and USA. Her self-titled debut solo CD was voted the 2012 'CD of the Year' by tradconnect.com. A former recipient of TG4 Young Musician of the Year, fiddle player Ciarán Ó Maonaigh hails from the Gaioth Dobhair Gaeltacht in Co. Donegal. Heavily influenced by his extended musical family and Donegal fiddle traditions, Ciarán released his solo album *Ceol a'Ghleanna* in 2004. He has also released three acclaimed albums with the band Fídal which also features Aidan O'Donnell and Damien McGeehan. Ciarán's music has featured in films, TV and radio. He has worked as a production coordinator, researcher and presenter on numerous television series for TG4 and RTÉ television and radio. *Caitlín & Ciarán*, the duo's 2015 debut CD release, received a 4-star review in *The Irish Times*.

Doireann Ní Glacháin, Brogan and Órlaith McAuliffe: Doireann Ní Glacháin is a fiddle player, sean nós singer, academic and broadcaster from Clontarf, Dublin. She learnt the fiddle from her father, Kevin Glackin, and inherited a love of the Irish language from her mother

Sorcha Ní Riada of West Cork Gaeltacht, Cúil Aodha. In 2019, she released a duet album with concertina player Sarah Flynn, *The Housekeepers*, which shone a light on five remarkable female Irish musicians from the early 20th century. She has been at the forefront of Irish language broadcasting in her work with TG4 and has toured the world with her fiddle playing. Doireann will introduce RLT Festival's screening of TG4's London edition of 'Ceolairacht' at The Kiln Theatre on Monday 28th October.

Raised in a musical household in London, with parents hailing from Killarney, Co. Kerry, Órlaith and Brogan McAuliffe were taught the tin whistle at home by their mother, Fidelma, with Órlaith taking up the flute aged nine, and Brogan the concertina aged ten. In 2016, Órlaith was awarded TG4's Gradam Ceoil Ceoltóir Óg na Bliana (Young Traditional Musician of the Year) and has over 20 gold medals from the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil under her belt. Brogan, who holds four All-Ireland titles, is a long-standing member of The London Lassies. Órlaith and Brogan both play regularly with London's popular Parish Céilí Band, have toured with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, and performed with the National Folk Orchestra of Ireland, debuting Michael Rooney's 'Macalla 1916'. Órlaith was also a member of the All-Ireland Award-winning junior Auld Triangle Céilí Band.

Born in Dublin to a family of musicians, **Aoife Ní Bhráin** has

"Catch the screening of TG4's 'Ceolairacht – Londain' with Doireann Ní Glacháin (free – including acoustic music, Kiln Theatre)"

established herself as one of the most versatile musicians of her generation, performing with musicians such as pianist Eliso Virsaladze, fiddle player Martin Hayes, violinist Mariana Sirbu, and jazz guitarist Wolfgang Muthspiel. She has been guest leader of a number of internationally renowned orchestras and is a member of the contemporary classical string quintet, Wooden Elephant. With the Goodman Trio she has explored the music collected around Ireland in the 1800s by Canon James Goodman. In October 2023, she released a duo album with Welsh harpist Catrin Finch, *Double You*, which was shortlisted for Best Folk Album in the RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards. Her co-written book on the acclaimed Dublin fiddle player, Tommie Potts, is due to be published by the Irish Traditional Music Archives later this year.

Since 2011, **The Bonny Men** are known for their unique sound and electrifying performances. Their albums have topped the Irish music charts, and they regularly perform on TV, radio, and at festivals. The band's third album *The Broken Pledge* sees them take a decade of their collective experience of the music and shape an album that walks the fine line between traditional Irish music with a new and vibrant sound, all underpinned with the unique driving arrangements that they're known for. The band recently added sean nós singer Roisín Chambers, bringing a fresh dimension to their sound. The makings of album number four are already underway. The Bonny Men are known as a band that has the ability to take the music from its traditional home and breathe new life into long lost and hidden tunes.

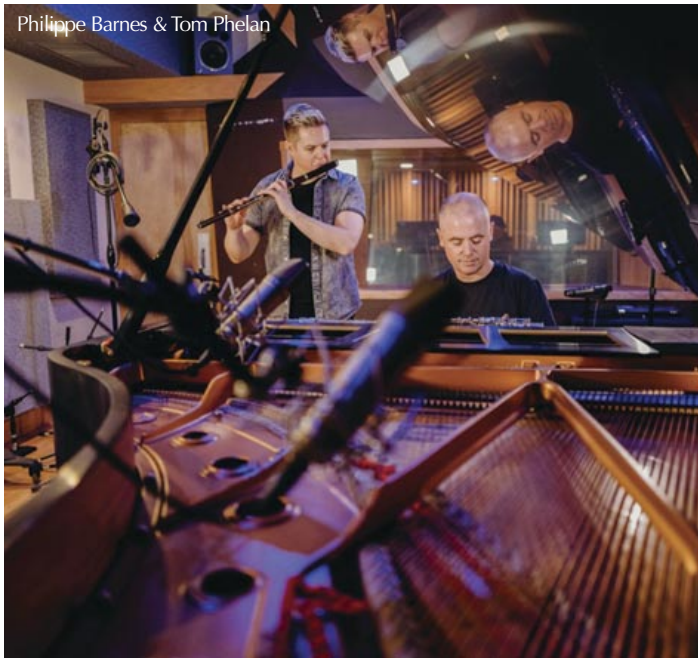
The Weaving (Méabh Begley, Owen Spafford and Cáit Ní Riain): The Weaving brings together the rich musical traditions of Kerry, Tipperary and Yorkshire, with music imbued with the driving rhythms of the Gaeltacht of west Kerry, where they first met. Méabh Begley is a singer,



Josephine Marsh

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songwriter and musician whose musical expression and stylings are deeply rooted within the Irish music, language and song tradition of her homeplace of Corca Dhuibhne, the Gaeltacht of West Kerry, Ireland. Owen Spafford is a fiddle player and composer from Leeds, an All-Britain Fiddle Champion, and BBC Young Composer Competition nominee. In 2022, Owen released a debut album with guitarist Louis Campbell which Martin Hayes described as “a beautiful, moody and tasteful recording that defies classification”. From Upperchurch, Co. Tipperary, Cáit Ní Riain is a traditional singer, multi-instrumentalist, and folklorist who grew up in the famous Jim of the Mills music pub. Her MA at University College Dublin focused on the songs and associated folklore of North Tipperary. Cáit is currently working on her first album of traditional songs. The trio have performed across Ireland, France and the UK, including The National Concert Hall, the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris, and Sidmouth Folk Festival.

From Westport, Co. Mayo, **Laoise Kelly** has pioneered a new style of driving instrumental harping showcased in her three critically acclaimed solo albums *Just Harp*, *Ceis* and *Fáilte Uí Cheallaigh*. A founding member of traditional group The Bumblebees, with whom she recorded two albums, and Fiddletree, a group with members from the US, Cape Breton, Scotland and Ireland, Laoise’s latest album is *Ar Lorg na Laochra* with Monaghan Uilleann piper, Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn. To date, she has appeared on over 70 albums with many of Ireland’s foremost artists, from Séamus Heaney and The Chieftains to Sharon Shannon and Mary Black. As well as touring and performing at festivals worldwide, she has also composed new music for theatre. In 2020, Laoise was awarded TG4’s Gradam Ceoil Ceoltóir na bliana (Musician of the Year).

Accordion player, multi-instrumentalist and award-winning composer **Josephine Marsh** comes from a musical east Clare/Co Meath family. She began to play the accordion at the age of seven and cites her father Paddy as her earliest musical influence. She recorded her first album with Cyril O’ Donoghue at the age of 20 and has gone on to record a further three albums – *Josephine Marsh*, *I Can Hear You Smiling* (with The Josephine Marsh Band) and 2018’s *Music in the Frame*. In 2020, Josephine was honoured with the prestigious Gradam Ceoil Award for Composer of the Year. Josephine and Laoise Kelly collaborated with

Clare fiddler, Tara Breen, and Cork singer and musician, Nell Ní Chróinín, in the 2019 Music Network Ireland tour of Ireland and London.

Virtuoso musicians and longstanding friends, **Philippe Barnes and Tom Phelan** have been exploring the rich legacy of Celtic music together for 20 years. The mesmerising combination of Philippe’s mastery of the Celtic flute tradition and Tom’s empathetic touch on piano and deep harmonic knowledge has established a devoted international following for their two previous releases and their sell-out performances around the world, from Guildhall London to festivals in Australia and South Korea. On their latest album, *The Clearwater Sessions*, Philippe and Tom present a selection of their favourite Scottish and Irish traditional tunes, interspersed with beautiful self-penned Celtic pieces, all delivered in their own unique style that seamlessly blends the timeless sound of Philippe’s flutes and whistles with the rhythmic drive and opulent chords of Tom’s piano.

Considered one of the finest banjo players of her generation, **Theresa O’Grady** was born and raised in a musical family in Luton, with parents from Mayo and Cork. With her brothers James (fiddle, uilleann pipes) and Ciaran (concertina), she became part of an exciting musical era in England in the 1980s and 90s, with a great grounding in the tradition from musicians such as Anne Caulfield, Tommy Keane, Paddy Hayes and Bryan Rooney. Taught by an exceptional banjo player and teacher, Annette Hannigan (Caulfield), Theresa moved to Ireland in 1997 and now lives near Aclare, Co. Sligo with her husband, piano accordion player, Declan Payne. In 2018, she released her widely anticipated and warmly received debut album, *BANJO’ista*. Theresa teaches and performs internationally.

From Hollymount, Co. Mayo, **Paul Clesham** is an accomplished concertina and piano player and academic. He holds multiple degrees in music and is currently pursuing a PhD at University College Cork. His duet CD with fiddle player Conor Arkins, *The Morning Thrush*, was released in 2023. He is a member of the All-Ireland winning Piper’s Cross Céilí Band.

Formed in 2019, **The Parish Céilí Band** was borne out of a Friday night session that used to take place in The Parish Pub, Wembley. With founder members including Chris Maguire, Rita Farrell, Jack Boyle, Órlaith and Brogan McAuliffe, the band won the All-Britain Senior Céilí Band title and continues to be in high demand for céilís and concerts. This will be their sixth consecutive appearance at RtLT Festival.

Presented by Doireann Ní Glacháin, the festival will screen TG4’s London edition of **‘Ceolaireacht’**. The programme, which first aired in January 2024, features Rita Farrell, Eimear McGeown, Mick O’Connor and musicians at The Lamb session, Seánín McDonagh, James Óg Carty, Reg Hall, James Carty, Gary Connolly, Brogan McAuliffe, Órlaith McAuliffe, Peter McAlinden, Karen Ryan, Pete Quinn, Annie Quinn, and Katie Quinn. Join us to celebrate this lovely presentation of some of the London Irish music scene on the big screen.

More information and tickets for the Return to London Town Festival are available at www.returntolondontown.org



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RETURN TO LONDON TOWN FESTIVAL 2024

October 25th – 28th

Karen Ryan tells Seán Laffey what is on offer this October at the Return to London Town Festival 2024.

The Trad Gathering



Seán: “Is the Return to London Town festival a highlight of the Irish cultural year in London?”

Karen: “While there are some great Irish music events being hosted on a smaller scale throughout the year at the Irish Cultural Centre, the London Irish Centre and by ourselves at various London venues, the Return to London Town Festival is the one opportunity for all of the Irish music, song and dance community to get together under one roof (mostly). This is the community’s chance to catch up, play tunes, sing and dance together, as well as to enjoy the music and good company of all the artists visiting from Ireland, to showcase Irish culture in London to a wider audience in a whole host of formats.”

Seán: “The main concerts are held at the iconic Crown Pub in Cricklewood.”

Karen: “The 4 -Star Crown Hotel in Cricklewood has two main performance spaces, four main session spaces, a restaurant, two bars and lots of comfortable lounge areas to relax or play music. Our other main local venues include Ashford Place, a wonderful charity based down the road. Originally founded to help with homelessness among the Irish community, now it is a community hub with activities, advice and various services for everyone in the local area. The Festival hosts a

Seán: “There’s a large cohort of excellent young players bubbling under in London.”

Karen: “Our London-wide youth project ‘The Trad Gathering’ will be rehearsing and performing an arrangement of tunes from the repertoire of the great North Leitrim accordion player and music teacher in London (teaching from the 1960s to the 1980s), Tommy Maguire. There will be about 30 young musicians playing to open the Festival in concert on Friday night 25th October.”

Seán: “Are there any CD launches planned for the weekend?”

Karen: “We have a CD and book launch in the Sala Room at The Crown Hotel Sunday evening (27th October), when Josephine Marsh will be launching her new book *111 Original Irish Music Compositions*. Also the London based duo Philippe Barnes (flute, whistle) and Tom Phelan (piano), with their new album *The Clearwater Sessions* that evening too!”

Seán: “IMDL is an umbrella organisation that promotes Irish Music in London; is it a must check site for what’s happening in the city?”

Karen: “We work with a number of session hosts around London to keep regular session listings updated on our website. There are over 40

“This is the community’s chance to catch up, play tunes, sing and dance together..”

large number of workshops here with a café available for tutors and attendees alike. Our session trail is held across a number of spaces at The Crown and at two locally cherished Irish pubs: Barrett’s on Cricklewood Broadway and Lucky 7 on Cricklewood Lane.

“We also feature St Agnes’ Centre, the local parish hall on the festival programme, hosting set dancing céilís on Saturday and Sunday of the Festival. This year, for the first time, Kilburn’s Theatre and Cinema ‘The Kiln’ will host a screening as part of the Festival programme on Monday the 28th of October.

“We have a wonderful array of tutors (most visiting from Ireland) this year, with Intermediate to Advanced level instrumental workshops (11am-1pm) on both Saturday and Sunday in the following instruments: fiddle, flute, whistle, uilleann pipes, button accordion, banjo and concertina. Additionally on Saturday we have: Sean Nós Singing, Harp and Strings Accompaniment Workshops, and on Sunday we have: Singing in Harmony Workshop. We also have workshops aimed specifically at children, offering an introduction to some of our traditions: Children’s Céilí Dancing Workshop (Saturday) and Children’s Singing Workshop (Sunday). Workshop tutors include members of The Bonny Men, Garadice, The Weaving and many more of our wonderful guest musicians this year.”

regular sessions spread far across the city these days, the scene is extremely healthy!

“Finally I would like to thank the Emigrant Support Programme (overseen by the Irish Embassy and Ireland’s Department of Foreign Affairs), Culture Ireland, also all our funders and sponsors – in particular Flannery Plant Hire, Embassy Demolition and Ardmore Group. Without these organisations, we could not dream of hosting the Festival; they help us to celebrate and share Irish culture, to entertain and educate and they help us make a lot of people happy!”

For more information please visit www.returntolondontown.org

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**Eileen O'Brien, Jackie Daly, Anne Conroy Burke,
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In Concert

with support by The Trad Gathering

Saturday 7th December

7.30pm Doors open, 8pm Music

Sala Room, The Crown Hotel

142 - 152 Cricklewood Broadway, London NW2 3ED

Tickets available from www.irishmusicinlondon.org

Supported by:



THE LEGENDS SERIES

Chapter 41 : Nollaig Casey. An appreciation by Mark Lysaght for Irish Music Magazine.

Nollaig Casey has had an astonishingly varied career which has extended far beyond traditional and folk music; she possesses an innate ability to adapt to any musical setting she finds herself in, with an effortless virtuosity which shines through, no matter what the composition requires. Best known for her exquisite fiddle playing, she is also an accomplished pianist and singer as well as being proficient on a range of other instruments.

She was born into a well-known musical family in west Cork, she began playing piano and whistle at a very early age before starting violin at the age of eleven. During her teens she played both classical and traditional music, picking up numerous awards including All-Ireland titles. She was awarded the Vandeleur Scholarship and studied music at University College Cork, graduating at just nineteen years of age. Following this, she joined the RTÉ Symphony Orchestra until she accepted an offer to join Planxty in 1980, recording and performing with them, including the groundbreaking *Timedance* interval piece featured at the 1981 Eurovision Song Contest.

Following the break-up of Planxty, Nollaig was in huge demand as a session musician, frequently working on various projects with Dónal Lunny, and she married guitarist Arty McGlynn, which led to them performing regularly as a duo. They were both members of a band put together by Lunny for the Ó'Riada Retrospective in 1987, and Nollaig featured on the groundbreaking TV series *Bringing It All Back Home* which charted the journey of Irish music at home and abroad.

“Her list of recording and performing credits is huge...”

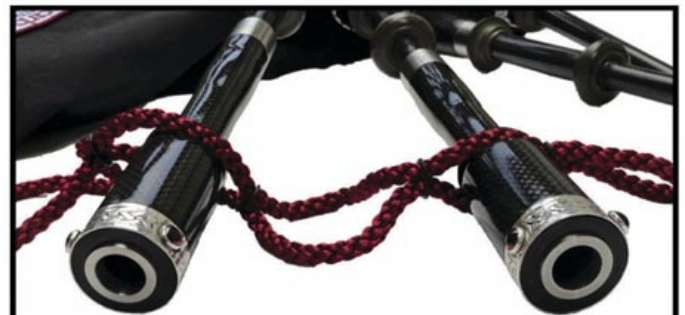
In 1989, Nollaig and Arty released the award-winning *Lead The Knave*, an ambitious and varied album, which reflected their eclectic backgrounds, and this received much critical acclaim, with a follow-up album *Causeway* issued in 1995. In the intervening period, Nollaig was a member of Dónal Lunnys's Coolfin project, an attempt to weave the various strands of his musical lineage into a traditional fusion setting, as well as appearing as a member of the house band on the TG4 series *Sult*, hosted by Lunny. She also featured as a soloist in *Riverdance* in its early days as well as playing first violin on Shaun Davey's acclaimed work *Granuaile*.

Her list of recording and performing credits is huge, but some artists she has worked with include Van Morrison, Enya, Sinéad O'Connor, Rod Stewart, Mary Black, Moving Hearts, Spandau Ballet, Christy Moore, Liam Óg O'Flynn, Dan ar Bras, Sharon Shannon, Alison Krauss, Maura O'Connell, Máirtín O'Connor, Paddy Keenan, Carlos Núñez and Andy Irvine. She has appeared on TV and broadcast on radio regularly throughout her career both in Ireland and internationally, and has toured extensively throughout the world. She is much in demand for film and TV scores as well with the ability to deliver brilliant performances seemingly at will as noted by Bill Whelan in his autobiography. Some notable films she has been credited on include *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *Waking Ned* and *Hear My Song*.

Having guested with so many others, Nollaig eventually released her own solo album *The Music Of What Happened* in 2004,

showcasing many facets of her unique musical identity, augmented by her sisters Máire and Mairéad, Sharon Shannon and her husband Arty, who co-produced the recording. It included a number of songs sung by Nollaig as well as her own compositions, and received high praise in the music press. Nollaig and Arty have also joined forces with her sister Máire and husband Chris Newman (another superb guitarist) to form The Heartstring Quartet, who released a wonderful CD *The Heartstring Sessions* in 2008, a heady amalgamation of each players' unique gifts. They toured intermittently when their schedules allowed and recorded a follow-up album in 2015. The following year, Nollaig collaborated with her two sisters to record *Sibling Revelry* with accompaniment assistance from Arty and Chris, who also produced. The three sisters were then commissioned to compose music to commemorate the Cork Folk Festival with a piece called *Corcach: A Journey*.

Sadly, Arty McGlynn passed away in 2019 after a long illness, but Nollaig remains active, being appointed as Artist in Residence at UCC in 2021 and still performing regularly in various line-ups including Cherish the Ladies as well as recording sessions for a diverse range of artists. She can look back on a long and rewarding career with involvement in a dazzling range of musical settings, each of which she has graced with aplomb. Her unique style and approach to the violin distinguished her as she sprinkled her musical charisma over so many musical landscapes.



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28th CELTIC COLOURS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL**October 11th – 19th, 2024****celticcolours.ca**

Buy your tickets today for the 28th Celtic Colours International Festival and experience the trip of a lifetime! The nine-day festival, running from October 11 to 19 on beautiful Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, will feature artists from Scotland, Ireland, the U.S., and Galicia, as well as all ten Canadian provinces.

International performers Carlos Núñez, Julie Fowlis, Archie Fisher, John Doyle, Mick McAuley, Oisín McAuley, The Dublin Trio, Dirk and Amelia Powell, Anna Massie, Cathy Ann MacPhee, Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, Caitlin Warbelow, Assynt, and Breabach will share stages with their counterparts from across Canada, including Richard Wood, Mary Frances Leahy, Rum Ragged, The Once, Jim Payne and Fergus O'Byrne, Dave Gunning, Ray Legere, Genticorum, Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers, Beaumont, and Alex Kusturok.

And, of course, there will be plenty of opportunities to see some of the finest traditional singers, players, dancers, and culture-bearers from Cape Breton as well, including Ashley MacIsaac, J.P. Cormier, Wendy MacIsaac, Hilda Chiasson, Howie MacDonald, Buddy MacDonald, Brenda Stubbart, Beòlach, Rose Morrison, and Andrea Beaton.

With more than 200 Community Cultural Experience events happening all over the Island, the chance to immerse yourself in the culture and jaw-dropping nature between concerts is always just around the corner. There is also the Festival Club, where the true spirit of Celtic Colours never sleeps. Brought to you by Big Spruce Brewing, the Celtic Colours Festival Club is open late, October 12-19.

For the full schedule and lineup of artists or to purchase tickets, visit celticcolours.ca.

GALWAY BAY'S CELTIC MUSIC FEIS**October 21st – 27th, 2024 www.celticmusicfeis.com**

2024 will herald the 21st year of Galway Bay's Celtic Music Feis, celebrating Irish songs, ballads, players and bands that will be flooding Ocean Shores, WA with music and fun for seven days this October.

Again, this year the festival begins with a start off show at our 8th Street Ale House in Hoquiam, WA and then kicks into high gear at Galway Bay in Ocean Shores, WA starting Tuesday October 21, 2024, and lasting until Sunday, October 27, 2024. Featuring an eclectic mix of Irish bands, choirs and dancers hailing from throughout the United States, Canada and, with of course Ireland rounding out this year's entertainment.

This year's artist line-up includes: JigJam, Daimh, Celtica Nova, Rory Makem, The Blow Ins, John Doyle & Mick McAuley, Ockham's Razor, Seattle Irish Dance Co. and more.

3 Venues – 10 Stages – 20+ Bands – Celtic Vendor Village.

Buy tickets at www.celticmusicfeis.com. Visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/celticmusicfeis>

Galway Bay Irish Pub - 880 Point Brown Ave NE - Ocean Shores, WA 98569 - 360-289-2300.

WILLIAM KENNEDY PIPING FESTIVAL**November 14th – 17th, 2024****www.wkpf.org**

Tickets are on sale for all events for the 30th anniversary edition of the William Kennedy Piping Festival. The event will take place at various venues across Armagh City from the 14th to 17th November and will include concerts, workshops, sessions,

lectures, events for children, plus an immersive uilleann piping academy in memory of the late Mark Donnelly.

This year's event will see the festival welcome back some of our favourite guests from over the 30 years plus introducing some new sounds to the local and international audience. Highlights include debut Irish performances from renowned Iranian piper Liana Sharifian, and Portuguese pipe ensemble Gaiteros Os Carriços. The festival is delighted to present two exciting traditional Irish music combinations - Michael McGoldrick, John Carty & Matt Griffin, who will be showcasing their recent album *At Our Leisure*, and the trio of Cillian Vallely, David Doocey and Patrick Doocey also presenting material from their recent release – *The Yew and the Orchard*.

To mark 30 years of the festival we have a special concert with past pupils of Armagh Pipers Club featuring Jarlath Henderson, Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn, Conor Mallon, Aoife Smyth, Maeve O'Donnell and many others. From further afield we welcome Italian trio Zampogneria with special guest Eric Montbel from France, Duo Lagrange Rutkowski also from France, Angus and Kenneth MacKenzie from Cape Breton, and Grace Lemon and Paddi Benson from London.

The cream of uilleann piping will also be present including Mark Redmond, Máire Ní Ghráda, Colm Broderick and Tom Delany.

For full details visit www.wkpf.org

The festival is sponsored by Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council with additional support from The Celtic Arts Foundation and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

TradFest20**20 Years of Ireland's Biggest Celebration of Trad & Folk Music
January 22nd – 26th, 2025****tradfest.com**

TradFest celebrates 20 years as Ireland's leading trad and folk festival in January 2025, with some of the biggest artists from home and abroad set to perform at iconic locations across Dublin.

2025 will mark 20 years of this hugely popular annual celebration of Trad and Folk. TradFest has enthralled audiences over two decades with its daytime and evening concerts at spectacular venues in the city centre and north county Dublin, including historical landmarks like Collins Barracks, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Malahide Castle and Swords Castle. For the first time TradFest will now extend into South County Dublin, with venues including Áras Chrónáin Irish Cultural Centre and St. Maelruain's Church in Tallaght set to host a variety of events. So from 22-26 January, audiences will enjoy performances throughout Dublin City Centre, Fingal and South Dublin and Temple Bar.

More details will be announced over the coming weeks, but among those already confirmed are: Tom Paxton, Transatlantic Women with Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Maura O'Connell, Julie Fowlis, Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh, String Sisters, The Scratch, Frankie Gavin and De Dannan & Biird, Women of Note with Aoife Scott, Peggy Seeger, Eric Bibb, Feile Kila, Wallis Bird -Vision of Venus, Stockton's Wing, Scullion, Sean Keáne, Martin Simpson, Karen Casey - The Women We Will Rise, Liz and Yvonne Kane with John Blake, Macalla, Yankari & Ines Khai, Dug, Landless and Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin as well as a celebration of Stephen Rea.

Tickets for TradFest 2025 are available from tradfest.com

Follow TradFest on Social Media:

Instagram - @tradfestdublin

Twitter - @trad_fest

Facebook - @tradfestdublin

TikTok - @tradfest

TradFest is produced by The Temple Bar Company with support from The Arts Council, Diageo, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dublin City Council, Culture Ireland, The OPW and RTE Supporting the Arts.

50th GIRVAN TRADITIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL

50 Years of Folk

May 2nd – 4th, 2025

www.girvanfolkfestival.org.uk

When the curtain rises on the 50th Girvan Traditional Folk Festival next May, it will mark an extraordinary mid-century milestone for the small community-run Festival which has consistently showcased the finest in traditional music. The Festival's 50 year run is all the more remarkable because the event is an entirely volunteer-run and grassroots affair.

The dates for the 50th Festival are Friday 2nd – Sunday 4th May 2025.

Since 1975, Girvan has not only promoted the very best in Scottish and English music but has also featured an impressive array of Irish artists. Over the years these have included: Dervish, Altan, Lúnasa, Liam O'Flynn, Mary Black, The Boys of the Lough, The Voice Squad, Inni-K, Arcady, Nomos, Danú, Len Graham, Craobh Rua, Deanta, Beginish, Tony McMahon, Brendan Begley, and many more. The Festival has also been a home to Scotland's Irish diaspora including Dick Gaughan, Kevin Mitchell, The Friel Sisters, Paul McKenna, Cathal McConnell, the Four Provinces Céili Band, Pat McNulty and others. It's an Irish music pedigree unmatched by any other small, Scottish festival. It goes without saying that the sessions and singarounds are not to be missed!

To keep up to date on what's planned for the 50th anniversary, follow the Festival on social media and check the website.

Whether it's your first or fiftieth time, you'll find the finest in folk and traditional music in beautiful South West Scotland next spring.

www.girvanfolkfestival.org.uk

www.facebook.com/girvanfestival

www.instagram.com/girvanfestival

MEITHEAL ENNIS AND LIMERICK PLUS MEITHEAL NA GAELIGE IRISH COLLEGE!

July 21st - 26th (Meitheal) & July 28th – August 2nd (Meitheal na Gaeilge)

www.tradweek.com

Next year, Meitheal Ceoil will be held in St. Flannan's College, Ennis and also in Villiers School, Limerick from July 21st to 26th. Marvellous tutors are already lined up. Reaction to Meitheal 2024 was marvellous and the Finale Concerts in Glór and the Millennium Theatre were unforgettable experiences, as was as the Reunion event in Wexford and the TG4 slots.

Some of the award-winners have already played at the events for which they were chosen and many more will soon appear at Ennis Tradfest, Ed Reavy festival in Cavan, the Fleadh Nua in Ennis, at the Corofin and Kilfenora Trad festivals, Consairtín and so on.

The full list of tutors will be published shortly and will be a who's who of the exciting performers currently on the scene.

Meitheal na Gaeilge Irish College – a Gaeltacht experience in a musical setting (total immersion in the Irish language) will run from July 28th to Aug 2nd, just after Meitheal Ceoil. Details and application at www.meithealnagaeilge.ie.

Information and application forms from Garry Shannon, Ruan, Co. Clare, Tel: 087 6704465 www.tradweek.com or via email: meitheal1@gmail.com Closing Date: March 21st.

Whether it's your 1st or 50th time, you'll find the finest in folk & trad in beautiful South West Scotland next spring.

www.girvanfolkfestival.org.uk

WILLIAM KENNEDY PIPING FESTIVAL 2024

Seán Laffey talks to Caoimhín Vallely, the festival's artistic director, who tells us what is in store in Armagh this coming November.

John Carty & Michael McGoldrick



The 30th William Kennedy Piping Festival, an international festival of bagpipe-focused traditional music, takes place in Armagh on 14-17 November 2024.

The Vallelys are synonymous with traditional music in Armagh, and even though Caoimhín is now based in Cork, he still maintains close links to his home city and the amazing musical legacy that the Vallelys have created there. Armagh Pipers Club was founded by Caoimhín's parents, Eithne and Brian in 1966, and they are still involved. The club was based on an educational model – it eschewed any emphasis on competition as a way of growing traditional music – and it has been hugely successful and influential for nearly 60 years. The William Kennedy Piping Festival grew out of Armagh Pipers Club's activities, and was named in honour of an 18th century blind pipe maker from nearby Tandragee.



Grace Lemon, Paddi Benson & James Patrick Gavin

just 33. The academy is for improver to advanced uilleann pipers and consists of four two-hour intense workshops with piper-tutors each day. It has proven very popular with many of our overseas visitors who can take in the Festival concerts alongside two days of intensive tuition from masters of the craft. This year's tutors are Caoimhín Ó Fearghail, Cillian Vallely, Colm Broderick, Éamonn Curran, Grace Lemon, Máire Ní Ghráda, Mark Redmond, Paddi Benson, Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn and Tom Delany.

“You can imagine that over the years a formidable cohort of talented pipers has developed in the city. Also incorporated into the academy are reed making workshops, including one-to-one advice and tuition with pipe-maker Éamonn Curran. He was the Club's first piping pupil back in 1969 and is now a veteran himself both as a performer and a teacher.

“You can imagine that over the years a formidable cohort of talented pipers has developed in the city”

Caoimhín says, “I suppose in many respects our festival could be described as niche. It always focuses on pipes and pipers, and over the years this has not only meant our native uilleann pipes, but also the highland pipes, Scottish border pipes, Northumbrian small pipes and a range of European and even North African bagpipes. We've had some 1,143 musicians participating over the years, with a total of 2,300 individual appearances. This has given both our attendees and the people of Armagh many close encounters with the diverse world of piping.”

Is there anything special to mark the 30th anniversary? “When it came to our 25th anniversary we invited some of the big bands that feature pipes, many of which have members who are past pupils of Armagh Pipers Club. This year we are inviting a number of solo pipers to perform at a special Anniversary concert on Friday; these are pipers who have had a long association with the city. Our opening concert on Thursday evening at the Market Place Studio Theatre will feature Calum Alex MacMillan and Ross Martin (Scotland), Conor Mallon who will perform music from his recent album *Unearthed*, Duo Lagrange Rutkowski (France) and Pádraig McGovern.”

The 30th edition of the WKPF includes five public concerts, a schools concert, the Mark Donnelly Piping Academy, and the 2024 William Kennedy Lecture, which this year will be given by the noted writer and musician Toner Quinn, called *How Ireland Thinks About Music*. There are instrument workshops for beginners and improvers and a number of free sessions in pubs and other venues.

Caoimhín tells us more about The Mark Donnelly Piping Academy. “It is named in honour of a much-loved local piper who died in 1999 aged

“We have invited 40 pipers to take part in the festival this year. We are concentrating on the solo piping tradition, and of course there will be impromptu groups setting up over the weekend and there will be many unofficial sessions happening around the town. You'll discover the finest of music on stages, in churches and in the many hospitable pubs in Armagh.”

After 30 years, the festival has a well earned reputation for excellence, run by volunteers and people with a passion for piping in particular, and for Irish music in general. It is an unmissable weekend.

Find out more at www.armaghpipers.com/wkpf/

Liana Sharifian (Iran)



ARMAGH 14-17
NOV
2024

30th William Kennedy piping festival

Paddi Benson, Grace Lemon &
James Patrick Gavin ENGLAND

Duo Lagrange Rutkowski FRANCE

Gaiteros Os Carriços PORTUGAL

Liana Sharifian IRAN

Michael McGoldrick, John Carty & Matt Griffin

Cillian Vallely, David Doocey & Patrick Doocey

Tom Delany, Caroline Keane & Conal O'Kane

ZampogneriA with Eric Montbel ITALY/FRANCE

Angus & Kenneth MacKenzie CAPE BRETON

Calum Alex MacMillan & Ross Martin SCOTLAND

Máire Ní Ghráda & Maeve Donnelly

Conor Mallon's "Unearthed"

Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn

Caoimhín Ó Fearghail

Padraig McGovern

Colm Broderick

Jarlath Henderson

Éamonn Curran

Toner Quinn

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Cadhla Tohill

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Mark Redmond

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CELTIC ARTS FOUNDATION

CELTIC COLOURS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL 2024

The very best of Cape Breton Island will be on display during nine magical days and nights of music, dance, scenery, and hospitality when the Celtic Colours International Festival—presented by TD Bank Group—returns for its 28th year, October 11-19.



Beòlach

Since its introduction in 1997, Celtic Colours has grown to become one of Canada's premiere musical events, and a cultural highlight of Nova Scotia's tourism season, collecting accolades ranging from regional music awards to national and international tourism honours. The festival has proven itself to be an important economic driver for the Island as well, expanding the tourism season by over a month and contributing more than \$205 million to Cape Breton's economy through the direct spending of festival attendees. And that doesn't even take into account the spinoff effects that spending has had in communities across the island.

The beloved, world-renowned festival is held during Cape Breton's most spectacular season, fall, when the vibrant reds, yellows, and oranges of autumn take over and bring the breathtaking scenery to life. As festival-goers make their way from



Archie Fisher

event to event, their travels may take them around the pristine Bras d'Or Lake, designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 2011, or along the Cabot Trail, often called North America's most scenic drive. Wherever you go on Cape Breton Island at this time of year, you are bound to find amazing scenery around every turn.

This year, 64 communities around Cape Breton Island will host 50 concerts and more than 200 cultural experiences. These are the communities where the culture has been nurtured for more than 200 years, providing context for the roots of the music and celebrating each community's contribution to the Island's unique culture.

Celtic Colours 2024 opens on Friday, October 11 at the Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre with "Let's Go Up Home Tonight". This exciting concert revisits a very popular and influential local television program from the 1980s that showcased musicians and dancers from the region. Cape Bretoners who appeared on the show, and who will be performing in this concert, include **Ashley MacIsaac**, **Wendy MacIsaac**, **Hilda Chiasson**, **Howie MacDonald**, **Brenda Stubbert**, **Melody (Warner) Cameron** and **Kelly (Warner) MacLennan**, and **Kinnon & Betty Lou Beaton**, among others. Host and co-creator of the show, **Gordon Stobbe**, will be on hand to welcome these performers and more back to the kitchen-themed stage.

Nine exhilarating days later, the festival wraps up in Sydney at Centre 200 with an impressive lineup for "The Grand Finale". Grammy Award-winning Galician piper **Carlos Nùñez** will be joined by Scottish Gaelic songstress **Julie Fowlis**, fast-rising Canadian fiddle star **Mary Frances Leahy**, the award-winning **Cape Breton Island Pipe Band**, and **The Dublin Trio**—featuring **Kevin Conneff**, **Tony Byrne**, and **Joe McKenna**.

Throughout the nine-day "week", Celtic Colours will feature artists from Scotland, Ireland, the U.S., and Galicia, as well as all ten Canadian provinces. Returning international performers **Anna Massie**, **Cathy Ann MacPhee**, **Jay Ungar & Molly Mason**, and **Breabach** will share stages with their counterparts from across Canada, including **Jim Payne & Fergus O'Byrne**, **Rum Ragged**, and **The Once** from Newfoundland and Labrador, **Richard Wood** and **Shane Pendergast** from Prince Edward Island, **Dave Gunning**, **The Gilberts**, and **Troy MacGillivray** from Nova Scotia, **Ray Legere** from New Brunswick, **Genticorum** from Quebec, **Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers** from Manitoba, and **Alex Kusturok** from Alberta. American roots maestro **Dirk Powell** returns to the festival in a duo with his daughter **Amelia**, and Dublin-born, North Carolina resident **John Doyle** makes his way back for the tenth time this year, performing in a trio with fellow Irishmen **Mick McAuley** and **Oisín McAuley**.

Of course, there will also be plenty of opportunities to see some of the finest traditional singers, players, dancers, and culture-bearers from Cape Breton Island. Among the Cape Bretoners performing this year are **Mary Jane Lamond**, **Dwayne Côté**, **Kimberley Fraser**, **Morgan Toney**, **Jenny MacKenzie**, **Harvey**

Beaton, Chrissy Crowley, Jason Roach, Kenneth MacKenzie, Andrea Beaton, Rose Morrison, Rachel Davis & Darren McMullen, Béolach, and The Men of the Deeps.

Assynt (Scotland), **Amy Laurenson & Mígeul Girão** (Scotland), **Beauxmont** (New Brunswick), **Caitlyn Warbelow** (U.S.), **Con O'Brien** (Newfoundland & Labrador), **Ryan Young** (Scotland), and **Stacey Read** (New Brunswick) are just some of the artists performing at Celtic Colours for the first time this year.



Julie Fowlis

As usual, there are several tribute shows scheduled for the festival. “The Many Styles of Lee Cremo” recognises influential Mi’kmaq fiddler Lee Cremo, and “Never Say Farewell: A Tribute to Tara Lynne” remembers beloved fiddler Tara Lynne Touesnard. Special concerts will also celebrate Cape Breton Music Industry Hall of Fame singer-songwriter **Buddy MacDonald**, and legendary Scottish singer-songwriter **Archie Fisher**—a member of the Scots Traditional Music Hall of Fame and a Member of the British Empire.

J.P. Cormier will be reflecting upon his ground-breaking 1997 album, *Another Morning*, and another round of “Big Sampie” winners will be featured in a concert celebrating recent recipients of the Festival Volunteer Drive’ers Association’s annual grant that assists an up-and-coming local artist’s first album. Some of the pillars of Cape Breton’s Celtic culture will be showcased in “The Cape Breton Fiddlers”, “Pipers’ Céilidh”, “Guitar Summit”, and the dance concerts “Close to the Floor” and “Dancing Up A Suête”. Gaelic and Acadian songs and dance traditions, as well as Mi’kmaq heritage will also be featured throughout the festival.



Dirk and Amelia Powell

If all this music and tradition makes you want to learn more about its origin, there are plenty of opportunities between concerts to immerse yourself in the culture and heritage. Cultural Experience Workshops and Community Events are offered in association with Celtic Colours. Organised into five categories—Learning Opportunities, Participatory Events, Outdoor Events, Visual Arts and Heritage Crafts, and the ever-popular Community Meals—workshops in many aspects of Celtic, Gaelic, and Cape Breton culture allow visitors and residents alike to get the hands-on experience they desire.

Learning Opportunities offer a variety of workshops, presentations, demonstrations, and lectures on Celtic history, music, dance, art, craft, and community heritage. Participatory Events welcome everyone, as a spectator or as part of the program, to community square dances, sessions, and kitchen rackets. To take advantage of Cape Breton Island’s spectacular scenery, there is a series of Outdoor Events which includes guided walks and hikes. The Visual Arts and Heritage Crafts Series presents a wide variety of events for art enthusiasts, skilled artists, hobbyists, and collectors as exhibitions and demonstrations are hosted by local galleries, guilds, and community art organisations. Celtic Colours Community Cultural Events really do offer a little something for everyone.

Don’t forget about Festival Club, brought to you by Big Spruce Brewing, where the true spirit of Celtic Colours never sleeps. Restricted to 19 years and over, Festival Club is open late Saturday to Saturday. Admission is \$20 at the door and you really never know who might show up to play. A highlight for many, the Club is definitely one of the

“Dublin-born, North Carolina resident John Doyle makes his way back for the tenth time this year”

most popular features of the festival. Located at Colaisde na Gàidhlig / the Gaelic College in St. Ann’s, Festival Club opens as the evening concerts are ending, offering an opportunity for Celtic Colours artists to perform in a more informal setting, or to get a session in with friends and colleagues from near and far.

The 28th Celtic Colours International Festival takes place October 11-19, 2024.

For the full schedule and lineup of artists or to browse the selection of memorabilia and merchandise available in the gift shop, visit celticcolours.ca.

Celtic Colours International Festival appreciates the support of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Province of Nova Scotia, and its many other partners.



Mary Jane Lamond

TradFest20

20 Years of Ireland's Biggest Celebration of Trad & Folk Music



Stephen Rea



Biird



Ines Khai

Photo: Al Bellamy

TradFest celebrates 20 years as Ireland's leading trad and folk festival in January 2025, with some of the biggest artists from home and abroad set to perform at iconic locations across Dublin.

2025 will mark 20 years of this hugely popular annual celebration of Trad and Folk. TradFest has enthralled audiences over two decades with its daytime and evening concerts at spectacular venues in the city centre and north county Dublin, including historical landmarks like Collins Barracks, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Malahide Castle and Swords Castle. For the first time TradFest will now extend into South County Dublin, with venues including Áras Chrónáin Irish Cultural Centre and St. Maelruain's Church in Tallaght set to host a variety of events. So from 22-26 January, audiences will enjoy performances throughout Dublin City Centre, Fingal and South Dublin and Temple Bar.

More details will be announced over the coming weeks, but among those already confirmed are:

Tom Paxton, Transatlantic Women with **Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh**, **Maura O'Connell**, **Julie Fowlis**, **Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh**, **String Sisters**, **The Scratch**, **Frankie Gavin** and **De Dannan & Biird**, Women of Note with **Aoife Scott**, **Peggy Seeger**, **Eric Bibb**, **Feile Kila**, **Wallis Bird** - Vision of Venus, **Stockton's Wing**, **Scullion**, **Sean Keáne**, **Martin Simpson**, **Karen Casey** - The Women We Will Rise, **Liz and Yvonne Kane** with **John Blake**, **Macalla**, **Yankari & Ines Khai**, **Dug**, **Landless** and **Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin** as well as a celebration of **Stephen Rea**.

Without any doubt, Stephen Rea is one of the most iconic and important cultural figures not alone of his own but of any generation to come from Ireland. The Oscar-nominated and multi award-winning actor has for long had a global reputation for his exceptional skills on both stage and screen. Respected by those right across the industry – directors, casting agents, producers and fellow actors – his artistry, craft and attention to detail are the stuff of legend. Across four nights in The Lark Theatre, Balbriggan in January 2025, TradFest will honour Stephen through words and music. All in all, a monumental celebration of a colossal figure.

Wednesday 22nd January will see a night of one of Stephen's great passions – poetry.

He was a close friend of many poets, including Derek Mahon and Seamus Heaney, and amongst those joining Stephen on stage will be Armagh-born and internationally feted Paul Muldoon. Also on stage will be the acclaimed poet, writer, scholar and harpist, Emily Cullen.

Thursday 23rd night's offering will focus on Stephen's acting career.

He'll be in conversation about his stage roles from Dublin to London and Broadway, from his work with Sam Shepard and his co-founding Field Day Theatre Company with Brian Friel, to roles written specifically for him.

And of course no celebration would be complete without acknowledging his huge contribution to both the small and silver screen.

On Friday 24th there will be a performance of *Ocean Child*, a work for narrator and musicians written and composed by Neil Martin, friend and collaborator of Stephen's for almost four decades. Recounting the tragic shipwreck of the RMS Tayleur in 1854, those performing include the West Ocean String Quartet, Louise and Michelle Mulcahy with Stephen himself narrating.

“Stephen Rea is one of the most iconic and important cultural figures not alone of his own but of any generation to come from Ireland”

Stephen is deeply passionate about music in many forms and Saturday 25th January offers a truly unique collaboration. Outstanding traditional musicians Matt Molloy, Maighread Ní Dhomnaill, Paddy Glackin and Derek Hickey, each of the TG4 Gradam winners, will perform alongside an orchestra in a programme of music and song arranged and curated especially for Stephen.

In line with its audience development objectives, TradFest also will deliver an expanded community programme later this year which will outline a series of new exciting, free community-led events in Fingal.

Whether you're a fan of live music, or just looking for a night of Irish culture and craic, TradFest is where you want to be in January 2025.

Tickets for TradFest 2025 are available from tradfest.com

Follow TradFest on Social Media:

Instagram - @tradfestdublin **Twitter** - @trad_fest

Facebook - @tradfestdublin **TikTok** - @tradfest

TradFest is produced by The Temple Bar Company with support from The Arts Council, Diageo, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dublin City Council, Culture Ireland, The OPW and RTE Supporting the Arts.



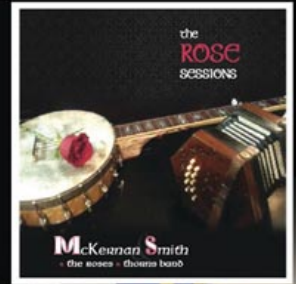
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GIRVAN FOLK FESTIVAL

May 2nd – 4th 2025

Seán Laffey chats to Neil McDermott who recalls some of the history and describes the character of the festival.



We are nine-months out and Neil is already thinking about the shape of the next Girvan Folk Festival, because, you see, 2025, is a significant milestone, a half-century no less, and one the festival team is eager to celebrate.

Some of its main strengths Neil tells me: “Is that the festival is old school, traditional, and based in the community, still with a local character, and with an organising team that know the ropes. Pete Heywood, who took the reins of the Festival in 1981 and went on to run *The Living Tradition Magazine*, is still around to offer advice and guidance, while Maggie Macrae who ran the show for an incredible 21 years, now chairs the board of Trustees.”

Ayrshire was the home of Scotland’s bard, Robert Burns, and many of his songs were collected from traditional sources. Needless to say there is a rich song and ballad tradition in the county. “Two years ago we published a song book called *Ballads and Songs of Carrick*. In 2025 we will be doing something similar for the traditional fiddle repertoire with an emphasis on the tunes and playing style of Ayrshire.”

With a long history of seasonal migration from the North west of Ireland to the potato fields and herring ports of Ayrshire, I wondered if there are any Irish links on the fiddle chain?

“There are some shared tunes and there may have been older styles of playing that were much closer than they are now. Scottish fiddling tends toward foot stomping driving tunes in contrast to the Irish lyrical style. But we know from the work of the Hidden Fermanagh project that some Ayrshire tunes made their way to south Ulster and these have been documented in the Gunn Collection, which was transposed by Sharon Creasey for Hidden Fermanagh, tunes such as: *Ereshire Lasses*, *The Bonny Lass of Ballantrae* and the jig *Dumfries House*, known in the Irish tradition as *The Maho Snaps*.” Neil speaks with some authority being a traditional fiddler himself.

“Although we are in many respects a local festival, we have always included exceptional acts from further afield. Looking back at previous rosters, Girvan has not only promoted the very best in Scottish and English music but has also featured an impressive array of Irish artists. These have included: Dervish, Altan, Lúnasa, Liam O’Flynn, Mary Black, The Boys of the Lough, The Voice Squad, Inni-K, Arcady, Nomos, Danú, Len Graham, Craobh Rua, Deanta, Beginish, Tony

McMahon, Brendan Begley, and many more. The Festival has also been a home to Scotland’s Irish diaspora including Dick Gaughan, Kevin Mitchell, The Friel Sisters, Paul McKenna Band (whose first line-up formed at the Girvan sessions), Cathal McConnell, the Four Provinces Céili Band, Pat McNulty and others. It’s an Irish music pedigree unmatched by any other small, Scottish festival. It goes without saying that the sessions and singarounds are not to be missed.”

With so long to go before May 2025, I wondered if there was anything that is firmly in the calendar for next year. “We have pencilled in traditional singer Margaret Bennett, and the trio Le Chéile (Charlie McKerron, Brian Ó hEadhra and Sandy Brechin). There’s also the *Sessions & Sail* team arriving on the tall ship the Lady Avenel, which

“Girvan Folk Festival has an Irish music pedigree unmatched by any other small, Scottish festival”

will host maritime music, and we close the festival with a fire ceremony on the beach. After the final concert, hundreds of townfolk will march to the shore for a celebration of the legend of The Laird of Changue. He was a smuggler and as the folk tales says: ‘Amid the quiet of the hills he distilled his liquor, and then he set forth by the hidden paths and the most unfrequented routes to dispose of it.’ Having done a risky whisky deal with the devil, Satan came for payment. However, the tumblers turned on the horned one during an epic battle on the shoreline; suffice to say the devil never troubled the Laird ever again.”

There is undoubtedly a thriving folk culture in Ayrshire, with many young people taking up traditional music and even a new Comhaltas branch. Access to the festival is easy from Ireland and there’s even complimentary travel from the Belfast Ferry courtesy of the festival’s very own Folky Bus.

Neil concludes with: “Whether it’s your first or fiftieth time, you’ll find the finest in folk and traditional music in beautiful South West Scotland next spring.”

Discover more at www.girvanfolkfestival.org.uk



Randall Stephen Hall
www.randallstephenhallsongs.com

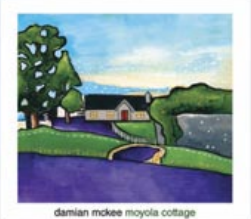
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A GLOBAL CELEBRATION OF IRISH MUSIC & CULTURE

Michael Lange highlights some of the richness and magic that is Milwaukee Irish Fest.



Milwaukee Irish Fest, billed as the world's largest Irish music festival, is a four day celebration of Irish/Celtic culture, language, theatre, film, literature, dance, food, history, music and more, hosted at Henry Maier Festival Park on beautiful Lake Michigan and held annually since 1981 with the support of nearly 4,000 volunteers. Hosted by nonprofit CelticMKE, it's dedicated to the promotion and preservation of Irish, Irish-American and Celtic cultures throughout the world and supports the Milwaukee Irish Fest School of Music and the Ward Irish Music Archives.

The festival itself is preceded by a week long Irish Fest Summer School in suburban Wauwatosa, the home of the CelticMKE Center. Summer school features many of the festival performers. It's such an incredible opportunity for students to spend time learning music from Liz Carroll or Rory Makem or Mary McNamara or Kim Robertson. Two of my favourites from the weekend were Boston based partners Joey Abarta and Jackie O'Riley who taught uilleann pipes and sean-nós dance respectively. Irish language, metal working, tune composition classes and much more were available this year.

The festival itself features a large cultural village at the south end of the grounds with its own Hedge School dedicated to presentations on history, politics, mythology and modern culture, a literature tent with author meet and greets, a genealogy tent, a Gaeltacht tent as well as an Irish Language Workshop tent, a theatre tent, the Moore Street Market and demonstrations of Gaelic football, hurling and curragh races. It also holds the Village Pub and Celtic Roots Stages, which hosted performers such as O'Jizo from Japan, Gadan with Enda Scahill, Rory Makem & Dónal Clancy, Enda Reilly, Joey Abarta, Ian Gould, and Mary McNamara & Sorcha Costello. This area alone would constitute a large and incredible festival in almost any other U.S. city and yet it is just a small piece on the southern "fringe" of Milwaukee Irish Fest.

Walking the rest of the grounds, you'll find local craft beer, a Children's Stage, ongoing Irish music Sessions near the Water Street Brewery, a large Celtic Kitchen tent with scheduled demonstrations,

travel information, a dance pavilion with called dance instruction, magicians, puppeteers, story tellers, comedians, Celtic canines, piping & drumming, dance troupes, wandering Irish Fest mascots, multiple shopping markets, several tents dedicated to the performers' music CDs and festival merchandise, many food, lemonade and coffee stands, the Tipperary Tea Room and the annual parade on Sunday.

There is also a tent promoting the Ward Irish Music Archives. This year's exhibit focused on the long line of award winning Irish-American stage and film actors. It's also become an important host space for interviewing artists. Each year a number of festival performers are invited to tell their stories about their lives in music, which are recorded during the weekend and added to the permanent archives in Wauwatosa. This year's interviewees included John Williams & Katie Brennan, Gadan, Enda Scahill, Drops of Green, I Draw Slow, Ispíní na hÉireann, and Joey Abarta & Jackie O'Riley.

The music itself is always the crowning glory of Milwaukee Irish Fest and this year was truly exceptional, featuring 13 bands which had never played there before and over 100 acts from 8 different countries. One of my favourite moments of the weekend occurred when the band Gadan introduced a number by saying, "We're 4 Italians playing at an Irish festival on the Celtic Roots Stage following after a performance by 3 Japanese." This incredible array of performers and musical styles from around the world is what makes Milwaukee such a special event and it leads to a great deal of collaboration as artists, both as whole bands and as individuals, often join each other on stage to play together. At one point on Saturday night, musician Colin Farrell finished his set with French group Doolin', then joined Lúnasa for their performance on another stage and in the middle of it jumped off the stage, hurried over to a third stage to join the Tribute to Sinéad O'Connor hosted by the Screaming Orphans, before running back to finish his set with Lúnasa.

The Sinéad O'Connor tribute followed on the heels of past "rock show" collaborations featuring bands like We Banjo 3, Skerryvore,

Jiglam and the Eileen Ivers Band. Many headlining bands such as these from past festivals were not present this year and they were missed. But it opened up the big stages and the schedule in general to many new and up and coming bands, which created great energy and excitement, and for many in the crowd a sense of discovery as they searched for new favourites.

The schedule starts on Thursday night with The Grand Hooley. It's really a brief introduction to what lies ahead with only 2 main music stages active from roughly 5:00 - 10:30 p.m., but it might have been my favourite night because it featured many of the new acts and, with a bit of running, allowed me to catch a good portion of 8 different performances where I made notes as to which bands I definitely wanted to see in full before the weekend was over. Much like the Cultural Village, the lineup on Thursday night would have made for an incredible festival almost anywhere else. Síomha, Drops of Green, O'Jizo, Onóir, Ispíní na hÉireann, The Bow Tides, The Tumbling Paddies and Elephant Sessions made for an amazing lineup and offered a wide ranging, eclectic glimpse into the diverse artistic explosion that is modern Celtic music with singer-songwriters, ballad groups, elite instrumentalists, technologically sophisticated bands and young but already polished performers.

A bit of rain came down Thursday night during the middle of the Elephant Sessions performance and many in the crowd scrambled for cover, but a group of young women kept dancing at the back of the main seating area. They were joyous and exuberant. I felt like the Derry Girls had dropped into the festival. The band saw them too and urged them to come dance up front. They joined many children and young adults already dancing on the metal bleachers there. Throughout the weekend I was really struck by how many young families, teenagers, dancers and kids of all ages were roaming the grounds and plugging into the music. One of the things I've noticed

be 7 main stages in Milwaukee and stay there for the entire day to enjoy a fabulous mix of groups playing a wide range of traditional tunes and songs, original ballads, amazing mashups and classic songs flipped on their heads by innovative artists.

Saturday is called The Day, but I came to see it as "Dance Saturday" because every main stage featured at least one performance by one of the many, young dance troupes that turn out every year. There seem to be dancers everywhere you look on Saturday and they bring a real, palpable energy to the event. They also bring their families and they often adopt one or more new bands and seem to move en masse to their shows as the weekend progresses. They also become part of the collaboration, often joining a band on stage for one or two numbers to huge applause.

Sunday is called The Scattering and it comes far too quickly. The day begins with a Catholic Mass attended by thousands, who bring food items for donation, which allows them free entry for the day. The grounds are soon crowded again by people looking to enjoy a day out, a day of family, a day of music and culture and a day of celebration for Irish-Americans, for lovers of Celtic music, for the Ward family itself and for the thousands of people who have worked diligently for over 40 years to make Milwaukee Irish Fest unlike any other. Its size is impressive, but its mission to recognise the contributions of Irish and Irish-Americans of the Diaspora is what makes it so crucial to the worldwide Irish community. The people of Milwaukee have embraced it and built it and promoted it and preserved it. It is inclusive and welcoming to all of its attendees and imbued with a spirit of joy and togetherness that is enriching and infectious.

To this end, some of my own favourite moments this year happened at the 3 performances by brothers Hugh and Ciaran Finn. The Finns packed an intimate stage, aptly named The Snug, which

“The music itself is always the crowning glory of Milwaukee Irish Fest and this year was truly exceptional”

that makes Irish music festivals in general, and Milwaukee Irish Fest in particular, so special is to see children and teenagers and parents and even grandparents all dancing to and sharing this same music. It gives me hope for its bright future.

Friday night is The Gathering with all 17 stages up and running. It doesn't begin until 4:00 p.m. but packs a lot of music into less than 8 hours of stage time. Crowd favourites like Natalie MacMaster & Donnell Leahy returned for this year, as did Goitse, Lúnasa, The Byrne Brothers, Screaming Orphans and Doolin'. The High Kings played to a massive audience and Talisk put on the first of 3 amazing shows. The Jeremiahs, with the incredible singing of Joe Gibney were fantastic. It was possible to choose any of what I consider to

sits near Lake Michigan. They play a mix of traditional songs and tunes with their own twists and they sing and play their own songs. They run songs and tunes together in exciting and innovative new ways. They sang a cover of a song written by Willie Nelson's son Lukas called *Turn Off The News (Build a Garden)* about finding the good in people, which brought the house down. For the last half hour of their sets, the audience clapped continually and for the last 15 minutes the entire tent was on its feet. My hands were numb but my heart was full. Everyone I talked to had their own list of favourite performers and favourite moments, which is what makes the shared experience of Milwaukee Irish Fest so rich and enduring.

To learn more, go to <https://irishfest.com>



Gadan with Enda Scahill



The Byrne Brothers

DLÙ

Close To**Own Label DRCD001, 9 Tracks, 33 Minutes****www.dluband.com**

Mixing Gaelic melodies with rock band arrangements is a tricky business, but this new band from the Glasgow Gaelic community seem to have got it about right. There's a female vocal and a male vocal, lead fiddle and accordion on the instrumentals, and a good mix of dance music with those drippingly miserable Hebridean airs, which can only have come from a North Atlantic climate. *Close To* is their second album in a scant two years, adding bass guitar to complete the rock band rhythm section of electric guitar and drums, and drafting in Duncan Lyle for some synthesiser sorcery.

After a wee filmic intro, guest singer Joe McCluskey powers into the classic North American Gaelic song *Mogaisean*, a proven crowd-pleaser, which lends itself to a thumping drum line and wailing guitar backdrop. *Gluais* and *Spicy Hector* present tasty fiddle-led jigs and accordion-fuelled reels - the titles may not refer to dodgy Stornoway clubbing habits or brilliant Barra curry cafés, but the music would certainly be welcome in either location. *Polarity* isn't quite a strathspey, and *Vitamin T* isn't quite a highland schottische, but you could definitely dance to them at a push. The second vocal track features fiddler Moilidh NicGriogair in a ballad of blood and death and despair - as someone once said, that's the way we do it in the Western Isles!

The final two tracks are more upbeat, a lively piping-style reel with a very dance-hall feel, funky beats building before the climactic rock anthem in Runrig style to close *Close To*.

Alex Monaghan**THE HARVEY BROTHERS****The Lads of Laois****Own Label, 16 Tracks, 47 Minutes****theharveybrothers.ie**

Two lads from Laois playing flute and banjo, Robert and James Harvey are accompanied by Caoimhín Ó Fearghail on guitar, Ryan Molloy on piano and Niall Preston on bodhrán. Older brother Robert is a well-respected academic, his solo album *Feochán (the Gentle Breeze)* was a dip into tunes from a raft of historic collections and he has brought that same forensic detail to the music on this album. We first encountered James as a fresh faced banjo prodigy at the front of a Meitheal concert in Limerick, he then went on to tour and record with Goitse. On this album you'll hear how he has blossomed into a virtuoso banjo player.

The Harveys present music from County Laois and its environs, combining tunes by composers Sean Ryan, John Brady, Jerry O'Sullivan, Robert Gleeson, and Joe Keegan with three by James and a few from local musicians and tradition bearers. I had no idea that some of my favourite Irish pieces were from Laois: *The Reel of Sceahóg*, *The Jig of Clonmore*, *Ballyfin Lake* and more.

There's a quare way of naming some of these tunes, but there's also a great sense of humour about them. *Our Lady's Bungalow* gets a solo flute treatment, a reel celebrating the National School built opposite Sean Ryan's house in Rosenallis, and *The Emo University* is a piece by US-based piper Jerry O'Sullivan named for his grandmother's primary school in the village of Emo.

Robert and James rattle off this and many other fine tunes, giving more space to the fine lament *Farewell to Father Newman* by John Brady and a waltz by James, which is beautifully played on banjo and low whistle. James switches to mandolin on two tracks, and there's a whistle duet on a pair of old slides, so variety is never lacking. One gets the feeling that there's being sibling synergy at work here for many many years.

The CD was recorded at Roundwood House in July 2023, produced by Laoise O'Brien and engineered by Grammy Award winner Ben Rawlins. If you are looking to expand your repertoire, *The Lads of Laois* offers a new horizon. The Harvey Brothers' music is always top notch, and with some little known tunes sources from a local tradition that has been hidden for far too long, this album is a major discovery.

Alex Monaghan**OISÍN MAC DIARMADA, DAITHÍ GORMLEY, SAMANTHA HARVEY
Lane To The Glen****Ceol Productions, 13 Tracks, 41 Minutes****www.oisinnacdiarmada.com**

From the get go, you know this is going to be good. The trio's tunes are carefully chosen, are played with utter respect, each is given a fresh coat of paint, and they dance in the sunlight.

Their opening salvo is a pair of tunes, starting with a Charlie Lennon composition *The Melvin Wave*, the second an Ed Reavy melody *The Lane to The Glen*. These set the tone of the album with a sound that harks back to the heyday of the big dance hall of 1920s Irish America. It's not a pastiche from Oisín's fiddle or Daithí's accordion, it's in the DNA of the tunes themselves. Those tunes have a provenance from Sligo and Connacht in the most part, that undefinable quality of lift and swing. Catch its essence on a set of barn dances: *Gráinne Mhaol* and *Malloy's Favourite*.

As you would expect from anything Oisín turns his hand to, the liner notes are succinct yet full of studied details. He tells us that the jig *Galloping Hogan* appears in the 1912 Roche collection and was recorded in 1987 on *The Fort of Kincora* by Martin Connolly and Maureen Glyn. That kind of background whets our appetite for more.

Back to the tunes themselves; Oisín demonstrates a consummate command of reels on *Crotty's Glory*, he glides easily into the tune and follows it with *Reel No. 295*, from the P.W. Joyce collection of 1909 - it was a favourite of The Lad O'Beirne's. Track 6 is a set of reels from Gormley, *The Dogs Amongst the Bushes* and two Paddy Gavin tunes, which he had from the playing of Joe Burke. Lavish and steady, they are a tour de force of box playing, and the backing is so good I'll make a note of it in the next paragraph.

Now that moment to applaud the backing from Samantha Harvey. It is of the highest order, her piano playing follows the contours of the tunes. There is no reversion to staccato heavy handed vamping, no dogeared showboating. She brings a sensitivity to Mac Diarmada's and Gormley's playing that reminds me of the synergy between Hayes and Cahill. If you back tunes, no matter what instrument you choose, this album is a masterclass in how to get it right.

One enthusiast online suggested you'd be hard pushed to find a better traditional album this year, and I would echo that sentiment wholeheartedly. The bar has been set very high.

Seán Laffey**NIALL HANNA****The Roving Journeyman****Own Label, 11 Tracks, 45 Minutes www.niallhanna.com**

Niall Hanna is a scion of a famous singing family (his grandfather was Geordie Hanna). This is the second album of traditional and newly composed folk songs from Niall. His pre-covid debut album *Autumn Winds* (2018) was nominated for Best Original Track at the RTÉ Folk Awards in October 2018. And in my opinion *The Roving Journeyman* surpasses even that impressive milestone.

He is joined here by some of the finest professional players to have emerged in the North this century: Damian McKee, Liam Bradley, Rachel McGarrity and Niall's brother Ciaran Hanna.

Niall lays down an impressive marker with the title track (the tune is *The Little Beggar Man*); there's drama in the telling, light and shade in the playing and a dynamic propulsion in the song. That is one of six traditional tracks, the five others are penned by Hanna and you'd be hard pushed to be convinced they are so new. He began writing those songs in 2020: *The Collier McQuaid* sounds like it could have been around for 100 years, equally *Farewell My Native Country* fits snugly into the canon of emigration songs. *Fremantle Jail* with its backbeat guitar riff tells the remarkable story of the Fenian rescue by the Catalpa whaling ship in *April 1876*.

The final track *The Wee Weaver*, is a traditional song with a very modern arrangement with Hanna's voice soaring above the complex interplay of instruments. It's hard to pick a favourite track - this is an album full of earworms. Comparisons will be made with the young Paul Brady or the sonic sweep of Jarlath Henderson, and in tone and attitude he is in the same premier league as Damien O'Kane. Comparisons are

in themselves but simple signposts. Niall Hanna is his own man and *The Roving Journeyman* is his masterpiece of modern Irish folk song.

Seán Laffey

ALANNA JENISH

Daleview

Own Label, 10 Tracks, 36 Minutes

www.alannajenishmusic.com

Peterborough, Ontario is turning into a bit of a focus for Canadian Celtic music, and this very fine second album from young fiddler and multi-instrumentalist Alanna Jenish is another milestone, its title honouring the local community.

On first listening I assumed most of *Daleview* was traditional, but in fact ten of the fourteen pieces here are Alanna's own: reels, jigs, and slower numbers, all fine additions to the fiddle repertoire. Pinning down the style of this music is a challenge: *Shoot the Moon* sounds distinctly Irish, while *Charlotte Street* leans towards the Cape Breton home of the Jerry Holland jig it's paired with here. The charming *Rockwood* shares the Irish serenity of Jenish's lovely version of *Tabhair dom do Lámh*, an ancient harp tune. *Two Weeks and a Day* shows more of the Scots connection, but *Second Home* reminds me strongly of Seán Smyth's fiddling with a Connemara lilt, which also suits Alanna's take on the old Irish reel *The Earl's Chair*. *Snow on the Mountain* is a powerful contemporary air admitting no particular allegiance to any one tradition, while *Wicklow Court Waltz* and the final guitar-led *Reel 25* have that Canadian swing about them: not quite Country, but not quite Celtic either.

As you might expect from a Canadian album, there are several excellent guests here, adding accordion, flute, bass, fiddle, guitar and piano to Alanna Jenish's own skills on fiddle, viola, mandolin piano and guitar. The sleeve notes specify who plays what when, but don't give much else away. No matter, *Daleview* has its own voice and needs no explanation.

Alex Monaghan

A.D.A.M (MAIREARAD GREEN & MIKE VASS)

Everybody Wants to Be Like Mary

Own Label, 9 Tracks, 52 Minutes

www.adamsounds.com

Billing themselves as A.D.A.M, Green and Vass have spent a day a month on this project, recording traditional tunes with a contemporary sound. Nine tracks of pipes, fiddle and keys are arranged with full electronic effects, rock band synth sounds and various electronic shenanigans to produce pleasant surprises and pumping dance music by turns. Think Moxie, Niteworks, Chilli Pipers, Rare Air, and all those fiddle-led or pipes-led rock bands from Malin Head to Milwaukeee.

The opening two numbers are in your face, loud, bass-heavy crowd-pleasers, but there are moments of calm beauty on *OGA*, '*S*' and other intriguingly-named tracks here. I suspect that the track titles are a shorthand for the traditional melodies in each medley - an extreme form of on-stage notes. The whole package is very minimalist - hand-written sleeve notes, a deliberately rough cover picture, and no information on individual tracks, but the music itself is intriguing, oddly compelling, raw and mysterious simultaneously.

The smallpipes air *LAT* raises the hairs on your neck, the jig beat of *DHE* masks a mouth music melody, the trippy club sound of *AN* is a head-spinner, and the final *UAM* peters out like the afterparty from a winter festival gig. I would have finished *Everybody Wants to Be Like Mary* on a more upbeat note, maybe moved *MAR* to final position - but that's the beauty of today's albums, you can chop and change the order as you wish.

Everybody Wants to Be Like Mary is currently available as a double LP - vinyl for the youngsters.

Alex Monaghan



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MORAG BROWN & LEWIS POWELL-REID**Auld Springs New****Own Label MBLPR01, 11 Tracks, 52 Minutes****www.moragandlewis.weebly.com**

A young but extremely experienced instrumental duo from southern Scotland, Morag and Lewis play fiddle and guitar, as well as cittern, bouzouki and piano accordion. The fiddle leads on tunes from all over Scotland and Northumberland, with the accordion and bouzouki taking point on French and Balkan pieces. This debut CD is evenly split between the two genres, and a couple of Powell-Reid compositions knit these different worlds together.

The opening *Tide Time* is a quite contemporary number, notes like running water, rhythms describing both the urgency of the waves and the implacable rise and fall of the sea. *Kiss'd Her Under the Coverlet* is the first of many eighteenth century tunes and older - the *Auld Springs* of the CD title - played with Morag's powerful Scots fiddle strokes.

Vas-Y Mimile (loosely translated into Scots as "Gwan yersel hen") brings a different vibe to the party, a French waltz with a balfolk feel: the Balkan dances *Midwinter Makedonska* and *Kemenska*, and Lewis' Klezmer creation *Miss Taylor's Delight* also fit into the pan-European genre as does the penultimate *Scottische à Yann*. A guitar melody introduces *The Knockie Set* in a style similar to Renaissance lute music, followed by a medley of Gaelic melodies collected in the early 1700s. Brown and Powell-Reid follow up with an old Aberdeenshire air and jig, plus a pibroch arranged for fiddle in the 1700s. All this music is given a new lease of life with barely a flicker on fiddle and accordion with accompaniment steady or spirited to suit.

A lively interpretation of *Go to Berwick Johnny* and a funky old Shetland reel get the blood pumping before the final Gaelic air *An Carn Gorm* concludes this varied and captivating collection.

Alex Monaghan**DAVID GRUBB****Circadia****Own Label SUD003, 17 Tracks, 54 Minutes****<https://davidgrubb.co.uk/>**

With two outstanding CDs to his name already, this Scottish violinist and fiddler has now settled in Wales and by pure coincidence his third album focuses on sleepiness. *Circadia* is a big body of work, a concept album inspired by what our brains get up to when we're not paying attention. It runs through a typical sleep cycle, from the rhythmic and at times monotonous *Daily Grind* through the soothing *Eigengrau* of falling asleep, different levels of consciousness and awareness in *Slow Wave* and *The Somnambulist*, to the frantic whirl and confusing rhythms of *Nightmare*. Each track is perfectly arranged and executed by a band of seven musicians, who combine the best of traditional and classical, rock and contemporary styles. It's mostly acoustic but with several touches of electric and electronic music.

Traditionalists might want to ease their way into Grubb's dreamworld through *Lucid*, a gentle clarinet line overlaid with some punchy fiddling which gives way to a sort of slow rocking reel. Try the easy-going jig beat of *Light the Torch*, eyes opening on the world again. After that, you might be ready for the weirdness of *Dream Speak* with its booming bass clarinet notes, or the straightforward rock and roll of *Hypnopompia* as all your systems fire up again to prepare for a new day, or even the alarming *Exploding Tetris* with its buzzing melody and rhythmic surprises.

It's all good though, and there's a return to conscious normality in the final smooth *Continuum*. A good forty winks, almost an hour of refreshing and engaging music, and if *Circadia* rocks you to sleep so much the better!

Alex Monaghan**OLD MAN FLANAGAN'S GHOST****Simple Little Boat****Own Label, 12 Tracks, 41 Minutes****www.oldmanflanagansghost.com**

This is another Celtic-folk-rock album from Toronto based Old Man Flanagan's Ghost, who are: Stephen Lamb (guitar, vocals), Matti Palonen (whistle, vocals), Bexy Ashworth (fiddle, vocals) and Scot Allan (vocals). They present a mixture of sensitive songs and good time barrel house music. The album is peppered with newly composed ballads, often telling true tales in strident fashion, ergo the opening *All Ships Away*, an electric bass, a full drum kit, highland pipes spanning the bridge between the verses; the effect is not dissimilar to a Breton Andro. It is an unashamedly stirring beginning.

In complete contrast the next track and the title song, *Simple Little Boat*, is a gentle folk number with whistle and Americana fiddle backing the repeated phrase: "Just a Simple Little Boat floating round your castle moat." They turn a bar room Romeo's rejection into a pub-roustabout in *Hell No*. I suspect this is terrific fun on a live stage. They keep that pace up on *Nelson's Blood*, a new song, not the well-known sea shanty. Again they give it the full Celtic bar-rock-Monty.

There's a magical hand behind this album, the wizard is their producer: Murray Foster, who played bass in arguably Newfoundland's most successful Celtic Rock band of all time, Great Big Sea. He's found kindred spirits in Old Man Flanagan's Ghost, from the earthy no-frills-allowed songwriting of lead singer Stephen Lamb, to the core members of the band augmented by a slew of fine guest players. There are some magically gentle numbers here, notably *Hand in Hand* and *Small Town*, each touched by nostalgia and a shared sentimental aching for old times and old places.

If you are looking to expand your own repertoire, there's treasure in the hold of this *Simple Little Boat*. And if you are looking for an alternative chorus to get your crowd swaying with their lighted smartphones, raise a glass to the band's *Pass The Pint*.

Seán Laffey**JC STEWART****BT45****Stanley Park Records, Single, 4 Minutes****www.iamjcstewart.com**

The song title refers to the British Post office code for JC's home of Magherafelt County Derry. Those UK postcodes are older than Irish Eircodes and are less precise, which works in this context, because here Stewart explores the nature of exile from the home place. In the accompanying PR that came with the press download, Stewart says: "There's a beauty and enchantment in Mid-Ulster that I have never been able to replicate anywhere else."

BT45 is a song about modern exile, leaving behind a world that has shrunk from Craigie Hills to the sound of cars passing by your window and the posters on your bedroom wall. Exile of course can be an edgy freedom as you begin flying from the parental nest and start making your own way in the world. JC Stewart has done this for real, moved to London, the mega city, where everything and nothing is possible. He's been successful, he's filled venues and toured with Lewis Capaldi and created songs with Niall Horan. Then he came back home to the Derry farm and immersed himself in songwriting, discovering that simplicity is its strength. There is a tell-tale sting, the bitter herb of the self-imposed exile resounds in the closing echo of the last chorus:

*But I know I left my heart in Ireland
Where my people still reside
There in that house below the hill
Where I grew up, Where I wish I was still
Oh, what I'd give to be there tonight*

John Callum Stewart proves songs of displacement are not old hat, they are a code for the human angst of loss and a hope of returning. And when you are back home, that exile colours your every view. *BT45* is a code that's there for cracking.

Seán Laffey

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THE ROVING JOURNEYMAN

Roud 360

The Roving Journeyman is the title of Niall Hanna's recent own label album. This month Seán Laffey rambles around the history of the song, which, he tells us, has been around for two hundred years.

The term *journeyman*, originates from *journé*, the French word for day. In the hierarchy of craft work, journeymen occupied the middle rung between apprentices and masters, the latter were allowed to be self-employed. The journeymen would be hired by masters on a daily basis, which necessitated them travelling from job to job to seek out skilled work.

The song has a long pedigree; it was first noted in 1832 in a catalogue printed in London by Thomas Birt. Its tune, *Maidrin Rua*, was printed in Robert A. Smith's "Irish Minstrel" of 1828. In the 19th century *The Roving Journeyman* was circulating in oral tradition and was notably recorded in Devon, England, by The Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould in 1889. He had the song from James Parsons, who had learnt it from his father, known locally as the singing machine, because like a steam engine, he was "hard to start and harder to stop".

The singer and fiddler John McGettigan made the first commercial Irish recording of the song in Philadelphia in 1932. A compilation of his recordings made between 1928 and 1938 was released in 1979 as *John McGettigan and His Irish Minstrels Classic Recordings of Irish Traditional Music in America* (Topic Records 12T367).

Peter Kennedy and Seán O'Boyle collected it for the BBC from Mary Doran, a 21 year old traveller from Wexford who was encamped in Belfast at Dan O'Neil's Loanen (Ulster Scott's for a laneway) between July 24th and August 1st 1952. (Some writers cite her husband Paddy as the source,

however, Kennedy refers to Mary in the 1975 book *Folksongs of Britain and Ireland*).

It was the second song on The Corries 1968 album *Kishmul's Galley*, and Ye Vagabonds have a YouTube version with concertina player Cormac Begley filmed in a cottage kitchen during their 2020 Music Network tour

"In this type of song there is always an opportunity for the singer to localise the action to flatter their audience"

of Ireland. Roud lists 68 recordings of the song, not including Niall Hanna's latest version.

In this type of song there is always an opportunity for the singer to localise the action to flatter their audience. In England, Brighton is often the chosen town and Scottish variants favour Glasgow. Mary Doran's 1952 recording has Philadelphia as the location (had she heard McGettigan's 78rpm disc?). Today Carlow is the most common town in Irish versions, one reason we suspect that Ye Vagabonds do a great job of journey work with the song.

THE ROVING JOURNEYMAN

I am a roving journeyman and I rove from town to town
Wherever I get a job of work I'm willing to set down
With my kit upon my shoulder and my stick then in my hand
It's down the country I will go, a roving journeyman

But when I came to Carlow the girls all jumped for joy
Saying one unto the other, "Here comes a roving boy;"
One treats me to a bottle, another to a dram
And the toast goes round the table, "Here's a health to the journeyman."

I had not been to Carlow three days, but only three
When a skinner's lovely daughter she fell in love with me;
She wanted me to marry her, and took me by the hand
And she slyly told her mother that she loved her journeyman

"Oh! hold your tongue, you silly girl, why do you dare say so
How can you love a journeyman you never saw before?"
"Oh! hold your tongue, dear mother, and do the best you can
For it's down the country I will go with my roving journeyman."

Then I took my stick into my hand, I took my kit also
And away from friend and parents a-roving I did go
There's not a town I go through but I get a new sweetheart
So girls, if you believe me, I'm sorry from you to part

So now my loving sweetheart to you I bid adieu
But if ever I return again I'll surely marry you
Now let them all be talking and say the worst they can
For it's off to Dublin I will go, a roving journeyman



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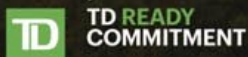
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IMRO is also prominently involved in the sponsorship and promotion of music in Ireland. Every year it sponsors a large number of song contests, music festivals, seminars, workshops, research projects and showcase performances. Indeed, IMRO is now synonymous with helping to showcase emerging talent in Ireland.

If you are a songwriter, composer or music publisher and your works have been commercially recorded, broadcast, performed live or are available on streaming/download platforms contact IMRO now to find out how you can become a member of our organisation.

Download an IMRO Membership Application Pack at
<https://imro.ie/music-creators/join-imro/>

IMRO has a comprehensive website www.imro.ie and Member Services can be contacted by email at membership@imro.ie

Membership of IMRO is free of charge.



IMRO. Copyright House, Pembroke Row, Lr. Baggot Street, D2.
Phone: +353 (0) 1 661 4844 Fax: +353 (0) 1 676 3125.
www.imro.ie