



# CLANNAD CELEBRATING FORTY YEARS

BY SEÁN P. FEENY AT CHRIST CHURCH

On Saturday night the pride of Gaith Dobhair, Clannad closed their last of three sold out concerts at this year's Temple Bar TradFest with two encores receiving no less than three standing ovation at Dublin's Christ Church Cathedral.

Earlier in the day on Saturday fans gathered at the Irish Film Institute in Temple Bar to watch a screening of the documentary Clann as Dobhar directed by Cathal Watters and first screened by TG4 in 2007 - the perfect way to get into the mood for the concert.

This beautifully made documentary gave viewers a great insight into the story of Clannad from the early days singing in the family home to their height of fame and featured extensive interviews with both Leo and Baba Brennan and other members of the family.

Following the screening all five members of the band came into the theatre to a resounding applause for a Q&A session with the audience.

As people arrived at Christ Church that night, they were greeted by the Nova Scotia Pipe Band, who entertained the crowd.

As Leo and Baba proudly watched from the multi national audience, Moya, Pól, Ciarán, Padraig and Noel captivated the audience with one hit after the other as they marked the band's 40th anniversary with a two-hour long concert.

There couldn't have been a more perfect setting than Christ Church for this very special occasion and as the haunting sounds of the Brennans and Duggans harmonizing filled the cathedral the audience was in awe.

What they were witnessing was five individuals with over 40 years musical experience and as they played many of their big hits, there were also some pieces that had never been performed live before.

But the real beauty of the night was that every single song sounded fresh and brand new as the band most definitely worked hard on their arrangements before the concerts and the fresh sound is surely a sign of things to come this year.

The audience was taken on a journey from Letterkenny Folk Festival, the early days of recording to the songs that won them Grammys and countless other awards.

Clannad performed so many of their hits as well as little gems such as their version of the classic Buachaill ón Éirne, Two Sisters and Down By The Sally Gardens dedicated to Leo and Baba.

Just when you thought it couldn't get any better Clannad were joined on stage by a world famous Irish choir.

Anúna joined them on stage for the whole second half of the show singing along to hits such Newgrange, Robin (The Hooded Man), I Will Find You, Dúlaman and In A Lifetime when they were also joined by Brian Kennedy to duet with Moya.

Clannad were backed by a host of top class musicians that included the likes of Eamonn de Barra, Sinead Madden and renowned percussionist Robbie Harris and many more who helped to create an unbelievable sound equaling any recording.

After being called back on stage for the second encore there was only one song that Clannad could finish off the night with.

Ending the show on the ultimate high (especially for those down from Donegal) they sang a roaring version of Teir Abhaile Riú bringing to a close what was truly an unforgettable and magical night for everyone present.



**Moya Brennan performing at Christchurch Cathedral. Pictures by James Goulden**





Clannad performing in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, featuring Belfast singer Brian Kennedy and Irish choir, Anúna as part of the Temple Bar Tradfest 2011 - 27 January 2011. Moya Brennan, Ciarán Brennan, Pól Brennan, Noel Duggan and Pádraig Duggan.