

Clannad



# TEMPLE BAR TRADFEST PREVIEW

Temple Bar, Dublin, January 26th-30th, 2011.

By Wendy Grace.

Internationally renowned performers, bustling streets, a session around every corner, captivating dancing, craic agus ceoil, pipe bands, street performers and storytellers are just some of the many highlights you can expect from the Temple Bar TradFest 2011. Now in its 6th year the Temple Bar TradFest looks set to have its most impressive programme to date.

This festival is organised by Temple Bar Traders and the principal sponsor is Bushmills Irish Whiskey, the festival is also supported by Dublin City Council, Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, IMRO and The Arts Council. In September 2010 Temple Bar Traders recently worked with Tourism Ireland to showcase this year's TradFest at the Irish Embassy in Berlin. The evening's entertainment included a performance from Moya Brennan, lead vocalist with Clannad, who sang to an audience made up of government ministers, media and selected dignitaries. A group of Temple Bar Traders also travelled to the event in Berlin which was expertly hosted by RTE radio presenter and TradFest programmer, Kieran Hanrahan. The evenings entertainment also included magnificent performances from Ciorras (stars of the TG4 series Lorg Lunny) and spectacular sean nós dancing from the Cunningham Family.

A large factor in the continued success of the TradFest (winner of the best Trad Festival in Ireland in 2008 & 2009) is the impressive presence of RTE broadcaster and accomplished musician, Kieran Hanrahan. With his wealth of experience at the heart of Irish music it is no surprise that this year's line-up will delight and excite audiences. Speaking of the 2011 program Kieran said:

"We are very proud of how the TradFest has grown over the past six years and has become a firm fixture on the Irish festival calendar. Year on year the festival has presented some of the biggest names in Irish music alongside many exciting new performers and musicians. I have no doubt that people will enjoy a truly exciting celebration of our culture. In our headline concerts we have assembled a line-up of some of the most iconic figures in Irish Traditional music coupled with some of the most exciting names in emerging Irish Talent."

Altan



The TradFest will take place from January 26th-30th, 2011. The opening concert will be held in the historic surrounds of Christchurch Cathedral with a performance from Altan and Friends. This special 25th Anniversary Dublin is part of Altan's world tour of Asia, the US and Europe.

Over 25 years of playing together, Altan have established themselves as one of the most important live acts to play traditional Irish music on the world stage. The Boston Globe has described them as "The hottest group in the Celtic realm!"

A host of well-known names in Irish music will join Altan for their concert in Christchurch Cathedral to celebrate and congratulate all that they have achieved.

On Saturday January 29th Christchurch Cathedral will once again resound with the sounds of Irish music, this time with a performance from Irish Music legends, Clannad who will be celebrating their 40 year anniversary. This performance is set to be unique and indeed rare, as TradFest 2011 will play host to their first performance in Dublin in almost half a decade.

Clannad have given a unique voice to modern Irish music, combining a deep love of traditional strains with a bold approach to writing

and recording. Their legacy is a hugely impressive collection of albums that has kept them at the forefront of Irish Music for 40 years.

They grew up in the parish of Gweedore, Donegal, in the secluded north-west. Máire, Pól and Ciaran Brennan sang and played from an early age in their father's bar, Leo's Tavern. Soon they were accompanied by their uncles, Pádraig and Noel Duggan, winning a talent contest in Letterkenny in 1970. Their first album, 'Clannad' was released in 1973.

'Theme From Harry's Game' was released in the winter of 1982. It leapt into the Top five in the UK charts. Their success continued on 'Legend' a soundtrack commissioned for the television series, 'Robin Of Sherwood' in 1984. During this period, the band received numerous awards including an Ivor Novello and they

Street Performers in Temple Bar



also became the first Irish group to receive the prestigious BAFTA award.

This primed the band for one of their most mesmeric records. 'Macalla', released in 1985. A chance remark to their friends in U2 resulted in Bono singing a duet with Maire on the track 'In A Lifetime'. This charted twice, in 1986 and again in 1989.

'PastPresent', released in 1989 brought the music of Clannad to an even bigger audience. Summarising their first four RCA albums it became a much-loved fixture in the UK chart eventually going Top 5. The BBC had obviously noted the huge success of the soundtrack to Robin and commissioned a project that would become the outstanding album 'Atlantic Realm'. This was followed in the same year by Clannad's first soundtrack work on the animation, 'Angel And The Soldier Boy'.

The 'Banba' album once again gave Clannad a Top 5 hit in the UK charts in 1993.

They released the albums 'Lore' (1996) and the Grammy Award winning 'Landmarks' (1998), again proving that no other act had

such a distinctive imprint, such a variety of style and tone. In 2003, Clannad released "The Best of Clannad: In a Lifetime", which is one of their biggest-selling albums to date.

With this plethora of musical achievements under their belt there is no doubt that the performance in Christchurch during the Temple Bar TradFest 2011 promises to be an unforgettable night, celebrating 40 years of song from one of Ireland's best known and loved bands.

Christchurch Cathedral



In between these two spectacular concerts, the Temple Bar TradFest will also play host to some of the best known names in Irish Music as well as showcasing up-coming Irish Talent. Following sell out concerts during last year's TradFest, Beoga will take to the stage in the Button Factory on Thursday January 27th. Guaranteed to live up to their name - the Irish word for 'lively' the band from county Antrim were drawn together in 2002 after 'jamming' in a ferocious session at the All-Ireland Fleadh. Since then Beoga has expanded the vocabulary of Irish music with a unique accent of their own, blending bluesy riffs with jazz and pop beats producing melodious traditional music played to some of the most imaginative and contemporary accompaniment in Irish music today.

Wall Street Journal dubs them "the most exciting new traditional band to emerge from Ireland this century."

"Individually talented and collectively inspired, this is a quartet who speak a language called music with a fluency beloved of the best multi-linguists" (Siobhan Long Irish Times, January 2005)

The release of Beoga's 2009 album 'The Incident' (which was shortlisted for a Grammy award) has seen the supergroup continue to blaze a pioneering trail, rewarding fans with their fresh creative energy and seducing a diverse array of music lovers. Their performance during the Tradfest will have every toe tapping in the house and add depth to an already eclectic mix during the festival.

Beoga





The TradFest will continue its role as providing a platform for showcasing the best in up-coming Irish talent as on the same night the Button Factory will play host to Ciorras. Hailed as 'a modern Bothy band', Ciorras bring a contemporary approach to traditional music. Ciorras, were formed as a band earlier this year when the individual members were among a large number of young musicians who featured in the hit TG4 series, *Lorg Lunny*. These 8 young musicians were invited by Irish music legend Dónal Lunny to create a new band with a fresh, new unique sound in traditional music. With an impressive assortment of instruments between them including fiddle, concertina, pipes, piano accordion, keyboards, percussion, low-whistles, voice and no less than 4 exceptional flute players, the possibilities are endless as demonstrated in their choice of repertoire woven among imaginative and original arrangements and played with an energy and enthusiasm that showcases the phenomenal playing ability and musicality of these outstanding young musicians.

Perfectly complimenting Thursday's exploration of the new, Friday January 28th will bring together the best in established Irish Traditional music talent. The evening's entertainment will see four incredibly talented soloists come together as two duets to create a exceptional night of Irish music. The first of the duets sees harmonica player Brendan Power join multi-instrumentalist Tim Edey. The first time Tim and Brendan met the musical sparks flew! Since then they have tried to perform together whenever they have time off from their busy individual careers. UK-based New Zealander Brendan Power is acknowledged by many as one of the most creative, skilled & versatile harmonica players around today. He has recorded fifteen solo CD's to date, in a wide variety of musical genres.

Since he moved to Britain in 1992, Brendan's eclectic skills and sympathetic ear have made him an in-demand session player, leading to live and recording work with artists such as Sting, Van Morrison, Kate Bush, James Galway, Paul Young, Shirley Bassey and many more. His playing is also heard on many Hollywood movie soundtracks (eg. the 2008 Oscar winning soundtrack for *'Atonement'*), and BBC TV series. He's also featured on the internationally-syndicated Jools Holland Show and toured worldwide, performing in venues such as China's Great Hall of the People and The Kremlin.

Tim Edey is regarded by many to be one of the finest multi-instrumental players of his generation. Tim currently plays guitar with the Sharon Shannon band, in a duet with the lovely Perthshire singer Isobel Crowe, guests with Session A9 & Charlie McKerron & Marc Clements and often plays with Kerry Irish music marvel Seamus Begley and the equally legendary Manchester Irish duo, Michael McGoldrick & Dezi Donnelly. He is a current master of more than ten instruments including; melodeon,



Left to Right: Chairman of Temple Bar Traders Oliver Hughes, Temple Bar TradFest 2010 Patron Stephen Rea and Festival Director Martin Harte

accordion, guitar, banjo, bass, piano, mandolin, whistle, bodhran and bouzouki.

Tim and Brendan will also give workshops during the festival and celebrate the launch of their first album together.

The feast of spectacular talent will then continue as Jackie Daly (accordion) and Matt Cranitch (fiddle) fuse their talent together.

For many years, Matt Cranitch and Jackie Daly have been among the foremost interpreters of the rich Sliabh Luachra tradition of instrumental music. The unique cultural area on the borders of northwest Cork and east Kerry provides a special repertoire of tunes as well as a very distinctive style of playing, and has long been a source of inspiration for both Jackie and Matt. Through their respective performances over many years, they have established enviable individual reputations in the world of Irish traditional music. Together however, the music that they create displays an additional collaborative dimension.

Jackie Daly's musical career is notable for partnerships with several fiddlers, beginning with Séamus Creagh. Their 1977 album, *Jackie Daly agus Séamus Creagh*, brought Sliabh Luachra music to a wider audience and, with its tight unison playing, set

Jackie Daly and Matt Cranitch



the standard for future accordion and fiddle recordings. In 2005 Jackie Daly was named Ceoltóir na Bliana (Musician of the Year) in the Gradam Ceoil awards of the Irish-language television station TG4. Matt Cranitch is renowned as a fiddle-player and teacher, both at home in Ireland and abroad. He has performed extensively with various groups at concerts and festivals, as well as on radio and television.

In 2010, Jackie and Matt collaborated and released *The Living Stream*, a recording of chiefly Sliabh Luachra music.

"Cranitch and Daly reach their greatest heights as a duo, interweaving fiddle and box on a set list that swings from their boisterous reading of *The Heather Breeze* to Jackie's beautiful, bare-boned slow air, *Ceo ar Mhuísire*." (Irish Times September 24th, 2010).

The streets of Temple Bar will come alive with the pubs throughout offering a real experience of Irish Culture and Craic. There will be free trad sessions throughout the festival in an extensive pub trail featuring hundreds of Irish Trad Acts. This year will also see the return of the legendary Sean O' Sé and his hugely popular singers club in the Temple Bar Hotel. (Friday the 28th and Saturday the 29th January) Outdoor stages will also be peppered throughout Temple Bar featuring a myriad of performances including that of the Siamsa Cois Life which is entirely focused on young musicians, singers and dancers coming from a host of organisations such as Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and Dublin dance Schools throughout Ireland. Interested schools need to contact Temple Bar Traders on Tel: 01 6772397 to book their places, which are limited.

A stellar line-up of Irish Music is not all that the Temple Bar TradFest has to offer as 2011 will include a greatly expanded family programme. Colourful and imaginative street performers will bring the cobblestones to life, while storytellers will roam the bars and public spaces telling tales of Irish mythology. The Ark will present a series of concerts for all the family with performances to include Barcó the virtuoso musical brothers of the De Barra family along with a very special guest or two. Sean Nós Dance group, The Cunningham Family will take The Ark's stage by storm with their energetic and unique dance blending the old and the new, the contemporary and the ancient for an unforgettable performance. Emerging young talent will also be showcased as the 2011 Siansa Gael Linn winning group Ioscaíd will perform. A children's club will provide an indoor wonderland



filled with entertainment from face painters to craft workers to balloon modellers. The Irish Film Institute will be programming a number of exclusive film screenings while GaelChultúr will offer a two-hour crash course in Irish song, dance and language. All participants are guaranteed to leave with at least a 'cupla focal' and a few steps as well.

The program for TradFest 2011 is both impressive and ambitious which not only firms up Temple Bars reputation as Dublin's cultural quarter but also provides a focus for Irish music and culture nationally and internationally. TradFest 2011 have lots more of their program to announce which they will tell us about as the festival draws nearer, you can keep up to date with all the festival news and get full details on the program as well as book tickets by visiting [www.templebartrad.com](http://www.templebartrad.com)

Siamsa Cois Life

