

PIPERLINK - ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE UILLEANN PIPES

There is little doubt that the uilleann pipes have become the iconic instrument in Irish music. The pipes, with their unique tonal quality and rich complexity, have had a profound influence on the country's musical heritage. The great piping masters of the 20th century left a legacy that continues to underpin the development of traditional music in general. Yet what do we really know about this fascinating instrument? How often do we hear a listener say 'I really love the pipes' without knowing the first thing about them? The instrument was central to most of the famous Irish music bands, from Sean O Riada's Ceoltóirí Chualcán to Moving Hearts - why? How do they work? Are they really Irish? And why, if universal instruments like the flute and the fiddle abound, do they have such a profound influence on traditional music?

PIPERLINK - now gives you a chance to really understand this beguiling instrument. Organised by Na Piobairí Uilleanna, the association of uilleann pipers.

PIPERLINK - will not only see the country's leading pipers perform at your local venue but will give you a chance to interact with the players and the instrument. Following an audio-visual introduction and a demonstration to show how the pipes work, eminent folklorist Sean Donnelly will conduct an entertaining talk on the history of the instrument, navigating a clear path through the development of the pipes, their evolution, the different styles and how to identify them, the great players and the famous 'piping' tunes.

PIPERLINK - doesn't stop there. We will also invite you to try out a practice set of pipes and participate in an interactive question and answer session about all aspects of piping. Other topics will include pipers from your locality, modern innovations using the pipes and their use in the accompaniment of songs and in ensembles. This original artistic experience will be introduced by one of Ireland's best known traditional singers Maireann Nic Amhlaoibh who will also perform some of the songs associated with the pipes. The piping performances will be given by leading exponents Séan Potts, Séan McKeon, Tómy Keane, Donnacha Dwyer, Jimmy O'Brien-Moran, Emmett Gill, Mick O'Brien, Peter Browne and Eanna Ó Críonín.



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During the month of September, Na Piobairí Uilleanna will be carrying out a nationwide tour of Uilleann Piping. This tour features music from nine of the country's leading pipers. Each interactive performance will include an illustrated discussion with piping expert Séan Donnelly and songs from Dana's Maireann Nic Amhlaoibh. This tour gives the general public the chance to hear the pipes being played by the leading exponents of the instrument as well as learning about different piping styles, piping masters and piping tunes. The audience will also be given the chance to ask questions and even try the pipes for themselves.



FINANCED IN PART BY ARTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND

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FEATURING
MUIREANN NIC AMHLOIBH and SEÁN DONNELLY
WITH TWO OF THE FOLLOWING PIPERS
SEÁN POTTS, SEÁN MC KEON, TOMMY KEANE,
DONNACHA DWYER, JIMMY O'BRIEN-MORAN, EMMETT GILL,
MICK O'BRIEN, PETER BROWNE, EANNA Ó CRÍONÍN



Tues 4th Sept	8pm - Blacket Centre - Dún Chaoin, Trillick, Co. Chiarraí
Thurs 6th Sept	8pm - St. John's Theatre - Listolow, Co. Kerry
Fri 7th Sept	8:30pm - Triskill Arts Centre, Cork
Sat 8th Sept	8pm - Anam Caháiríoch - Glion at Aherlow, Co. Tipperary
Fri 14th Sept	8:30pm - The Coombe Arts Centre - Rinehally, Co. Wicklow
Sun 15th Sept	8pm - An Grianna - Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
Sun 16th Sept	2:30pm - Séamus Émils Centre - Meel, Co. Dublin
Wed 19th Sept	11am - The Dock - Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim
Thurs 20th Sept	8pm - Millmount Centre - Drogheda, Co. Louth
Fri 21st Sept	8pm - Maudabawn Centre - Cootehill, Co. Cavan
Sat 22nd Sept	8pm - Na Piobairí Uilleanna - 15 Henrietta Street, Dublin
Sun 23rd Sept	8pm - Berr Theatre and Arts Centre, Co. Offaly
Wed 26th Sept	8pm - Dundalk II - Dundalk, Co. Louth
Thurs 27th Sept	8pm - An Caháiríoch - 216 Falls Rd Ballast, Co. Antrim
Fri 28th Sept	8:30pm - The Coleman Irish Music Centre - Gurteen, Co. Sligo
Sat 29th Sept	8pm - Aras na nGael - Evans St, Galway
Sun 30th Sept	8:30pm - Aras Inis Glainne - Belmullet, Co. Mayo
Fri 12th Oct	8pm - Salustio Arts Centre - Navan, Co. Monaghan



Séan Potts was born in Dublin in 1947. The Potts name has long been synonymous with traditional music in Dublin and Séan continues an important family tradition of piping which dates back to his great grandfather John Potts, a one-wooded piper who came to live in Dublin early in the 20th century. Séan's father, Séan Sr., was a founder member of The Chieftains. His grand uncle Tommy Potts was one of Ireland's most unique fiddle players while Eddie Potts, another grand uncle, was a piper and fiddle player of note. Séan has toured and performed extensively over the years. He published a solo CD and has recorded with The Donal Leamy Band, Bakerswell and McCanerys. Séan plays in a clear, inspiring, vibrant style, influenced largely by the great piping masters Seamus Ennis, Tommy Rock and Willie Clancy.



Séan McKeon grew up listening to music at home in Dublin, with his parents Gay McKeon (uilleann pipes) and Mary Corcoran (fiddle and piano) being his earliest influences. He began playing the uilleann pipes at the age of eight with lessons from his father and later from Séan Potts. At a young age Séan took an interest in the older generation of musicians, such as Seamus Ennis, Paddy Toohy and James Morrison. He has toured Europe and America performing solo, and also with fiddle player Liam O'Connor. Séan plays a full set of concert pitch pipes made by Gibson O'Brien. In 2005, along with his brother Conor and his father Gay, he featured in the piping recording *The Dusty Miller*. Also in 2005 Séan was awarded the TGA award for Young Traditional Musician of the Year.



Tommy Keane was born in Waterford City in 1953. Encouraged by local piper Tommy Kearney, he took up the uilleann pipes, and he also received lessons from Pat Mitchell and Liam O'Flynn. In the 1980s Tommy spent seven years in London where he played with many of the legends of Irish music living there, including Tommy McCarthy, Bobby Conroy and Roger Shanley. While there he also provided music for productions by the National Theatre Company and Rambert Ballet Company. He has also recorded with The Pogues, Clannad and Robb McElfat. Since 1987 he has lived in Galway and in 1991 he released his first solo album, *The Piper's Apron*. He has also released a duet album, *The Wind Among the Reeds* with his wife, concertina player Jacqueline McCarthy.



Donnacha Dwyer has been playing the pipes for 18 years since his first received lessons at Na Píobairí Uilleanna at the age of 16. Donnacha has been performing professionally around various Dublin music venues for the past ten years and has performed in most European countries, the US, Japan, Korea, Singapore and the Caribbean. He has recently released an album with fiddle player Malachy Bourke entitled *Bourke and Dwyer*. In 2005 Donnacha was awarded a grant from The Arts Council under the Deis scheme to study the art of uilleann pipe-making. He has been learning with pipe maker Des Seery, where he has almost completed the construction of his own full set.



Jimmy O'Brien-Moran was born in Tramore, County Waterford. A liking for the playing of Liam O'Flynn in Plasna led him to the piping of Willie Clancy and Seamus Ennis. Recordings of these and others were sought out and hungrily consumed. In 1970 he was invited to record on the compilation album of young pipers *The Piper's Rock*. He plays on 1820s Colman cut offered to him by Seán Reid. He has played, taught and lectured at most of his major uilleann piping events around the world. In 2006 he was awarded a PhD at UL for his study of the musical legacy of Paddy Conneely, the blind piper of Galway.



Emmett Gill was born in London in 1976. He started playing the pipes in 1983, being taught by Billy Browne and John Murphy at the London Pipers' Club. The Irish music scene in London was a big influence on his piping, as were visits to various events in Ireland and to the Willie Clancy Summer School in Milway Malbeg, Menzies Bell in 1994 to study, and to Galway in 2000, he has been very involved in the music scene in both cities. In more recent years he has developed an interest in early recordings of uilleann pipes, fiddle and flute music from the 70s era. In 2006 he co-produced *Old Time Records Vol 1*, a collection of previously unreleased 78 recordings. He plays two 1/4 sets of pipes (in concert pitch and in C) made in the US by David Quinn and Benedict Keohler. He has just released his debut CD *The Mountain Breaker*.



Mick O'Brien was born in Dublin in 1961 into a well-known musical family, and started learning the pipes at nine years of age. His musical influences were his father Dinny, a box player, and pipers Seamus Ennis and Tommy Rock. Mick began his education on the uilleann pipes in the Piper's Club in Thomas Street and later at Na Píobairí Uilleanna, where he absorbed hundreds of tunes and refined his technique. He has recorded with such artists as The Dubliners, Frankie Gavin and the RTE Concert Orchestra. He has toured extensively and given master classes throughout Ireland, Britain, Europe and America. His solo piping CD, *My Morning Dew* (1996), and *Kitty Liu Over* (2003), his duet album with fiddle player Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh, have both been widely and highly acclaimed.



Fauna Ó Cróinín started learning the pipes at eight years of age with Malleg Mac Carrthaigh in Na Píobairí Uilleanna in Dublin. Subsequently she had lessons with Tommy Morris, Mick O'Brien, Brian Mac Monere, Robbie Hanson, Mike Smith and Ronan Brown. Fauna has been teaching at the weekly classes in Na Píobairí Uilleanna for the past two years. She has competed successfully at All Ireland Fleadhanna Ceol and at an IRGfestivals.



Peter Browne was born in Dublin in 1953. He received tuition in uilleann piping from three of the great players of modern times: Seamus Ennis, Leo Rowsome and Willie Clancy. In the 1970s he spent two periods playing on both pipes and flute with The Bobby Band. He has made two groundbreaking albums of music and songs which were recorded in the 1980s and were combined and reissued by Gail Line in 2001 as *Seachtá Míleáid D'óg eivín o Seachtá*. He has played as a session musician on recordings by such people as Paul Brady, Maire O'Connell, Mary Black, Mick Hanley and The Dubliners. He has featured as soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra and with the RTE Concert Orchestra on their 1998 tour of North America. He has twice been the winner of the Oireachtas uilleann piping competition. He currently works for RTE.



Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh was born in 1978. She lived on the islands of Inishar and Capa Clear for nine years, after which her family settled in Binn Chiarra, Co. Kerry. Growing up, she was immersed in the dance music, slow airs and songs of west Kerry, attending sessions with her fiddle playing father from a young age. There she began to play the flute and tin-whistle, and to learn sean-nós songs from such local singers as Aine Mí Leathie, Eilín Mí Chearrao and the Bagley family. She has a Diploma in Fine Art from the Dublin College of Art and in 2002 was awarded an MA in Traditional Music from UL. Muireann has toured and performed with various musicians and groups before, in 2003, joining the group Dána. Muireann is now a regular contributor to TV and radio, at home and abroad.



Séan Donnelly was born in Dublin in 1953, and educated at Trinity College, Dublin. As a teenager, he became interested in bagpipes of various kinds, and began learning the uilleann pipes in Na Píobairí Uilleanna in the 1970s. Bróndan Breatnach, founder and chairman of MPU, encouraged Séan's interest in research and writing, publishing his first articles in his own journal, *Clár Síora* then. Séan has contributed articles on piping, harping, dancing, and on various aspects of Irish music, to academic and local history journals, as well as to *An Píobaire*, the newsletter of Na Píobairí Uilleanna, and to other publications dealing with piping of various kinds.

