

Victoria Gardens Cultural Center / Lewis Family Playhouse
The City of Rancho Cucamonga presents:
March 17th and 18th, 2023

celtic spells

MÁIRÉAD NESBITT; CO PRODUCER, CELTIC VIOLINIST



PHOTO: JOHN HASSETT PHOTOGRAPHY

A Grammy® and Emmy® nominated artist and composer, **Máiréad Nesbitt** has enchanted millions around the world as the featured Celtic violinist and founding member of the globetrotting music phenomenon *Celtic Woman*. Loyal fans of all ages, across geographical and cultural boundaries far beyond the musical heritage of Ireland, have adored her beguiling stage presence and versatile instrumental talents. She is the featured violin soloist on eleven number one Celtic Woman albums on the Billboard World Music Chart, Disney Tinker Bell movies and Disney's newest show, Harmonious Live at Epcot, on Disney+. Máiréad has played for four US Presidents and The Pentagon. She has played in the most famous shows, orchestras and venues in the world including Carnegie Hall, Radio City, Royal Albert Hall, Red Rocks to name a few.

Hailed as “*A demon of a fiddle player*” by the NY Times, Máiréad’s solo albums, *Raining Up* and *Hibernia*, have charted on four different Billboard and Heatseeker charts. The album *Devil’s Bit Sessions* features three generations of her family and was recorded in the three-hundred-year-old Nesbitt family home in County Tipperary, Ireland. *Celtic Spells*, the newest album, is out digitally on all platforms now! Physical CDS are available for pre-order at Target stores nationwide ahead of March 31st and at valleyentertainment.com

Exclusive signed CDS are available at maireadnesbitt.com

NEIL GROVER; CO PRODUCER AND MUSIC SUPERVISOR



Neil W. Grover holds the distinction of having performed with one of the world's foremost orchestras on the soundtrack for one of the most successful blockbuster movies of all time (*Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*) and with the iconic rock band, Aerosmith. A renowned percussionist and music industry pioneer, for over 40 years Neil was a percussionist with the Boston Symphony & Boston Pops.

In 1980 Neil founded Grover Pro Percussion Inc, leaders in high quality percussion manufacturing. His company is featured on two episodes of *How It's Made* and in 2019 was awarded the *SBA Small Manufacturer of the Year* regional award.

Since selling the company and leaving the orchestra he focuses his time on music management, consulting, arranging, and composing. Neil is married to Tony® nominated actress, Maureen Brennan.

ED KEANE; EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, PRODUCER



Ed Keane founded Ed Keane Associates in 1996 in Boston, Massachusetts. Renowned drummer and educator T.S. Monk and Grammy winning banjoist Alison Brown were among the first artists to become clients. Through the years, Ed Keane Associates has worked with some of music's most gifted artists in a variety of genres. The company currently represents The Manhattan Transfer, Take 6, Nnenna Freelon, T.S. Monk, Shana Tucker, and many more.

Ed Keane Associates has launched touring productions including THE SUMMIT: The Manhattan Transfer Meets Take 6, DREAMING THE DUKE in association with The JFK Center for Performing Arts, and GEORGIA ON MY MIND: Celebrating the Music of Ray Charles. CELTIC SPELLS is the newest production, starring Mairead Nesbitt, co-founding member of Celtic Woman and world-renowned Celtic Violinist. Ed has also produced a number of noted recordings including the recent GRAMMY-nominated FIFTY, with The Manhattan Transfer and Dave Thomas of Take 6.

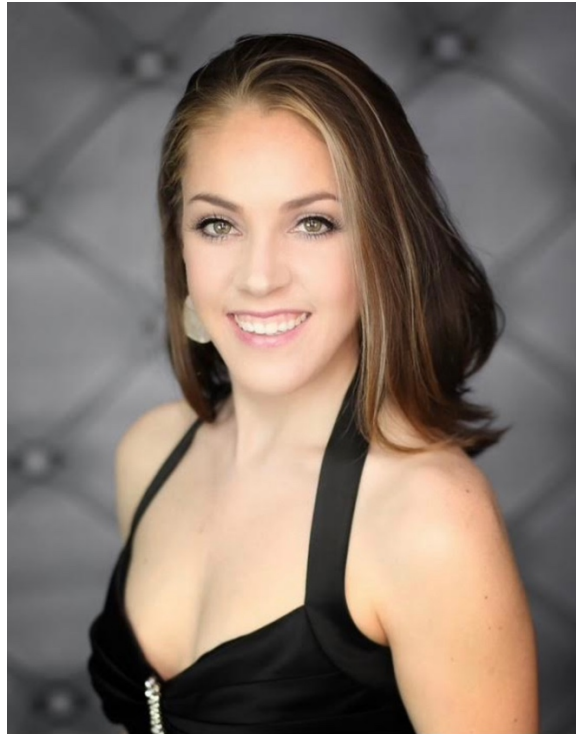
PEADAR TOWNSEND; ARRANGER, ORCHESTRATOR



Irish born **Peadar Townsend** is a music composer, arranger and performer. His original works and arrangements have been performed, recorded and broadcast all around the world. He has received numerous commissions from a variety of soloists and musical ensembles including: the RTE Concert Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra, Laredo Philharmonic, Irish Chamber Ensemble, Dublin Brass, Christchurch British legion wind Orchestra, Verwood concert brass.

His music has been broadcast on RTE lyric FM and BBC radio and performed around the world. His recent works include *Celtic Spells*, 'Postcards from Home' concerto for trumpet, and "Irish Folk Stories Live." As a percussionist and timpanist Peadar has an enviable resumé performing with a vast range of music from the concert hall with orchestras in Ireland and the U.K. such as the RTECO, RTENSO, Ulster Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Dublin Philharmonic, to shows and West End productions such as Riverdance, Miss Saigon, Jesus Christ Superstar and percussionist with legendary Irish rock band 'Aslan'.

RYANN MURRAY, VOCALIST



Ryann Murray is a graduate of The American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City. In 2019, Ryann performed in Benevento and Matera, Italy as part of the Capital of Culture celebration with her band Freda World Music. Ryann made her debut performance at Carnegie Hall in 2022.

She has had the honor of singing at the Robert F. Kennedy Legacy Awards hosted by Joe Kennedy III. In addition to Freda World Music, Ryann also performs with Celtic violinist and founding member of Celtic Woman, the Máiréad Nesbitt trio. She joins Máiréad again on the new CD and show *Celtic Spells*.

CARA WILDMAN; PERCUSSION, BODHRÁN, SEAN NÓS DANCER



Cara Wildman is a well-respected percussionist, pianist, dancer, and bodhrán player from Dorchester, TX. Cara’s talents have led her to perform in a variety of musical ensembles and genres around the world including in Puerto Rico, Argentina, Mexico, Ireland, Canada and across the United States. She has performed with Carolina Crown Drum & Bugle Corps, Celtic Thunder, The Irish Memory Orchestra, Joanie Madden (Cherish the Ladies), Oisín Mac Diarmada (Irish Christmas in America), Máiréad Nesbitt (Celtic Woman) *Celtic Spells* and Donal Lunny. She holds a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Music Education from Texas Christian University, and a second Master's in Irish Traditional Music Performance from the University of Limerick in Ireland. Cara has studied with bodhrán greats Jim Higgins, Eamon Murray, Martin O'Neill, Cormac Byrne, Colm Murphy, Colm Phelan, and Junior Davey. Cara's playing has garnered international accolades including winning the 2016, 2018, and 2019 Senior Bodhrán Champion for the Limerick and Midwest Fleadhanna, and placing 1st at the 2021 All-Ireland Fleadh Fest—the first American ever to win this category.

“Cara’s playing has great taste...as an artist she can be immersed in her playing while retaining perspective on its contribution to the music. The development of the bodhrán is an exciting work in progress. I think Cara is at the front edge of this development...”- Donal Lunny

NANCY O'CONNER; KEYBOARD



Photo: Genevieve Fridley

Nancy O'Conner is a music director, pianist, arranger, composer, singer, and voice over artist. Associate Conductor/Keyboard player for the Lulu National Tour of "*Waitress*." Nancy has a B.M. in Contemporary Writing and Production from Berklee College of Music, with minors in Conducting for Musical Theater and Musical Theater Writing.

Nancy is originally from Central New York, where she was involved in community theater at CNY Playhouse, The Redhouse, Rarely Done Productions, and Appleseed Productions. While there, she was the Founding Music Director of At Rise Productions, a Central New York-based theater company. Nancy served as Music Director for several musicals, including *Band Geeks* (2019), *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* (2018) and *tick, tick... Boom!* (2016).

AMY KERCSMAR; CELTIC HARP



Amy Kercsmar is a full-time freelance harpist and pianist and playing Celtic Harp on Celtic Spells!

Amy holds a Bachelor of Music (cum laude) from Wheaton College Conservatory teaching harp and piano lessons online. Amy is also a Certified Music Practitioner, which gives her the opportunity to play therapeutic harp music for people in need of healing music therapy.

For most events, Amy plays a concert grand Lyon & Healy Style 23 harp. For Celtic performances and music therapy, she typically uses her smaller Triplett Signature harp.

ÉRIN O'DONNELL; DANCER, CHOREOGRAPHER



Érin O'Donnell started dancing at the age of seven under Peggy White with the An Rince Mór School of Irish Dance in Long Island, NY. After a successful competitive career nationally and internationally, she danced professionally, most notably as an opening cast member of *Celtic Fyre* and *Carol of the King, the Irish Dance Christmas Spectacular*. She toured internationally as the lead performer in *Night of the Dance*, and as part of the US premiere of *Fainne Óir* on Broadway. She many Irish musicians, including *Danu*, and *The Prodigals*.

A New York native, in 2013, she received her TCRG certification with honors from An Coimisiún Le Rincí Gaelacha. She opened the O'Donnell Academy in Brooklyn in 2018. She is also the co-founder of **Brooklyn Irish Dance Company**, a performing arts company bringing Irish dance, music and culture to the stage to cultivate professional-level opportunities for dancers in the NYC community.

SCOTT DOHERTY; DANCER, CHOREOGRAPHER



Scott Doherty is a U.S. based Irish Dance *World Champion* originally from Boston, Massachusetts. Scott was trained by the world-renowned Rita O'Shea, her daughter Lisa Chaplin, and the amazing team of teachers at the O'Shea-Chaplin Academy of Irish Dance. Scott's story is unique - going from one of the last competitors in his age group to Senior Men's World Champion in less than 5 years. He considers himself lucky that his hard work paid off and led to success in competitions as well as touring the world with many shows including Riverdance and Lord of the Dance. More recently, Scott started his own production company creating shows such as Rockin' Road to Dublin, Christmas in Killarney, and now *Celtic Spells*.

CHRISTOPHER MURRAY; VOCALIST



Christopher Murray has been performing as far back as he can remember. As a child he was a member of the Treble Chorus of New England. The highlight of that period was singing at the Christmas Tree lighting ceremony at the Massachusetts State House by then Governor Michael Dukakis in 1988. Today he is a vocalist with Freda World Music. Performing in Benevento and Matera, Italy in September 2019 being a highlight.

He is delighted to be a part of the *Celtic Spells* tour alongside his sister, Ryann Murray.

IAN STEED; GUITAR



Exploring the lines between Irish and American Traditional Music, **Ian Steed** is an acoustic guitarist based in Cambridge Massachusetts. Though originally from California, Ian comes from a family of Irish musicians going back generations. He has performed all over New England with the band Red Luck and can also be heard in Irish and Bluegrass sessions around the Boston area. Ian studied Guitar Performance at Berklee College Of Music, where he now works full-time supporting the Performance Division.

Celtic Spells would like to thank;

David Glenn; Tour Manager
Tony Huerta; Sound
Tim Janis and Elizabeth Demmer; Video
Tiffany Moore; Social Media