

Masters of Tradition on Tour

Celebrating Irish Music in its Purest Form

"In its purest form, Irish traditional music speaks a universal language," says fiddler **Martin Hayes**.

As Artistic Director of **Masters of Tradition on Tour**, Hayes has brought together seven of the most compelling artists in Irish music today for a unique concert celebrating the art form. Joining Hayes on fiddle are vocalist **Iarla Ó Lionáird**, fiddler **Cathal Hayden**, guitarists **Dennis Cahill** and **Seamie O'Dowd**, **Máirtín O'Connor** on accordion, and *uilleann* piper **David Power**.

With performances of solos, duets, trios, and full group collaborations, the evening's format gives real insight into the musical journeys that these musicians, and the masterful music they play, have taken over the years. The touring group makes their American debut in April 2012.

Masters of Tradition is named for the highly-regarded music festival held each August in the Irish coastal town of Bantry, Co. Cork. Martin Hayes devised the festival, in collaboration with the classical music organization West Cork Music, in order to create a space where the heart of traditional music could be revealed. The intimate performances take place in an old stone church in the town center and in Bantry House, one of Ireland's most beautiful 18th-century Georgian mansions.

In 2009, the Sydney International Festival invited Hayes to create a touring version of Masters of Tradition to play at the Sydney Opera House. The remarkable line-up of Irish musicians quickly sold out a two-night engagement at the 3000-seat venue, captivating the audience and winning critical acclaim.

"The goal of this touring show is to focus on the details and nuances of Irish traditional music," says Hayes. "The performers are all masters of their instruments. Through their talent and abilities, the sophistication and artfulness of the music is revealed. "

THE MUSICIANS:

Martin Hayes (Artistic Director) - Fiddle: Born and raised in East County Clare, a part of Ireland renowned for traditional music and a particularly lyric style, Martin is considered one of its most distinguished native sons. He has both remained faithful to the East Clare style and transformed it, to convey its deep and essential musicality that can stand along side any of the world's greatest music. He tours the world in a duet with guitarist, Dennis Cahill and is involved in a number of collaborations with traditional, classical and contemporary musicians, as well as theatre, dance and film projects. www.martinhayes.com

~ Continued ~

www.martinhayes.com

Iarla Ó Lionáird – Vocals: Born into a small, Irish-speaking enclave in West Cork, Iarla Ó Lionáird's upbringing revolved around singing as the dominant form of artistic expression. As vocalist for Afro Celt Sound System, Ó Lionáird played festivals all over the world and recorded five albums with the group before he embarked on his remarkable solo projects.

www.iarla.com (*Pronounced Ear-la O Len-nard*)

Dennis Cahill - Guitar: Born in Chicago to parents from County Kerry, Dennis Cahill's innovative accompaniment is acknowledged as a major breakthrough for guitar in the Irish tradition. Cahill's playing turns minimalism into an art form. Dennis is also a record producer in Chicago and a talented photographer. www.denniscahill.com

Máirtín O'Connor - Accordion: With an accordion style displaying astounding skill, dexterity and versatility, Máirtín O'Connor has played with many of traditional music's leading groups as well as collaborating with artists including Elvis Costello, The Chieftains, De Danann and The Dubliners. www.mairtinoconnorband.com *Pronounced Mawr-teen O'Connor*

Cathal Hayden – Fiddle: Cathal Hayden is from a musical family in Co. Tyrone. He has a natural and distinctive style, original and inventive. Cathal was the catalyst for the formation of Four Men and a Dog, one of the foremost Irish traditional bands. www.tradcentre.com/cathal *Pronounced Kah-hl Hayden*

Seamie O'Dowd - Guitar: From Co. Sligo, Seamie O'Dowd grew up steeped in traditional music. He played the fiddle as a child and then learned guitar, banjo, mandolin, bouzouki and bodhrán. He toured with the band Dervish for six years and then with Máirtín O Connor and Cathal Hayden for over a decade, a collaboration that continues to this day.

www.seamiedowd.com *Pronounced Shay-mee O'Dowd*

David Power - Uilleann Pipes: David Power was born into a musical family in County Waterford. He played the whistle from a young age, and at 10 was encouraged to take up the uilleann pipes. David won the Senior All-Ireland Piping Championship and the coveted Oireachtas Piping competitions in 1992. He has represented Ireland at the Lorient Interceltic Festival and was a member of Liam Clancy's Fairweather Band.

www.myspace.com/davidpoweruilleannpiper

PRESS QUOTES:

The Australian

"It would be unfair to pick out any player ahead of any others from this accomplished line-up of three guitarists, two fiddlers, uilleann piper, accordionist and singer. The players were presented in constantly changing permutations - solo, duet, trio, and for the thrilling climax of galloping jigs and reels, ensemble."

Sydney Morning Herald

"The rapport between acclaimed fiddler Martin Hayes and American guitarist Dennis Cahill was like two painters coating the same canvas: Hayes creating the intense foregrounds and Cahill setting and shading them in perfect harmony."

~ *Continued* ~

www.martinhayes.com

Sydney Morning Herald:

“Unaccompanied singer Iarla O Lionaird unfurled his tenor voice to heart-rending effect.”

“Uilleann piper David Power made [the tune] even more potent. His phrasing and meticulous employment of bent notes...cracked the heart of the tune wide open, making it unspeakably desolate, yet...beautiful...”

“The trio of button accordionist Martin O'Connor, fiddler Cathal Hayden, and guitarist Seamie O'Dowd played with...vigour.”

“Thereafter the entire company converged, arranged into various combinations to maximise textural variation, including the twin fiddles of Hayes and Hayden tearing into a reel, with the full punch of the ensemble in reserve.”

April 2012 Tour:

Friday, April 13, New York City, Symphony Space, www.irishartscenter.org.

Saturday, April 14, Boston, Somerville Theatre, www.worldmusic.org.

Sunday, April 15, Philadelphia, Annenberg Center for the Arts, www.pennpresents.org/tickets.

Monday, April 16, Alexandria VA, Birchmere Music Hall, www.birchmere.com.

Wednesday, April 18, Olympia, Washington Center for the Performing Arts, www.washingtoncenter.org.

Friday, April 20, Denver, Gothic Theatre, www.celticevents.com.

Masters of Tradition is supported by **Culture Ireland**, an Irish State Agency, promoting Irish arts worldwide.

Management and Booking: Elizabeth Roth, Roth Arts. rotharts@gmail.com.
www.martinhayes.com

Publicity and Promotion: Judith Joiner, Judith Joiner Publicity.
judithjoiner@gmail.com, 203-748-7110

For information on The Masters of Tradition Festival in Bantry, West Cork, Ireland, visit www.westcorkmusic.ie.



Culture Ireland
Cultúr Éireann

Roth Arts