
The Center for Irish Music

September 2006

Class Notes:

Welcome one and all to our THIRD fall semester! We've had a great summer – some students took lessons over the summer, others took a break. *Paddy O'Brien* and *Daithi Sproule's* summer masterclasses were big hit. A lot of people traveled – and much of that travel was music focused. We had four students and two instructors enjoy time in Ireland this summer: *Rita Davern*, *Jode Dowling*, *Anna Lethert*, *Daithi Sproule*, and *Meghan* and *Colleen White*. Our student ensemble had a busy performance schedule, including *Hobgoblin Celtic Festival* in Red Wing, *Excelsior MN Art in the Park*, the *Irish Fair of Minnesota* and more. Many of our instructors had busy performing schedules including *Laura MacKenzie*, *5 Mile Chase*, *The Doon Ceili Band*, *Altan*, *Gan Bua*, *Todd Menton* and more. We are all happy to settle back in to our regular schedule of teaching and mentoring here in Minnesota. We welcome especially our new families and new instructors including Todd Menton (bodhran and strings) and Django Amerson (fiddle). You can read more about them on our website www.centerforirishmusic.org



CIM booth at the Irish Fair of Minnesota, St Paul, August 2006
Pictured are Meghan and Colleen White, Ben Hogan and parent MaryBeth Garrigan. Thanks to all those volunteered and those who stopped by and said hello!

IMDA Grant Opportunities: APPLICATION DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 15!

The Irish Music and Dance Association is pleased to announce a new educational Grant Program designed to encourage students of all ages to pursue their interest in the traditional arts of Ireland. This can include the study of music, dance, storytelling, Irish language – the options are endless. The IMDA hopes that folks will be creative in thinking about how a grant might be used. While a grant may be used for tuition to an established dance or music program, applications will also be considered for fees or travel expenses to attend a Master Class or seminar, or to help with a first pair hard-soled dance shoes. Grants are available to anyone interested in expanding and deepening their understanding of their art, no matter their age. We are also asking grant recipients to bring their new skill back to us by participating in one of the IMDA events during the next year. So keep your eye out for an IMDA grant recipient on the stage at next year's St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebration at Landmark Center! Grant applications are available by contacting Jan Casey at jcaseymn@msn.com or 651.699.8937. The deadline is Sept. 15, 2006. See <http://www.irishmusicanddanceassociation.org/> for an entry form.

Minnesota Feis, September 23 – Music Competition Opportunities:



The Minnesota Feis is our local Irish dance competition. It will be held on Saturday, September 23 at the River Center in downtown St Paul. The Center for Irish Music student ensemble will be performing the morning of the feis from 7:30-8:15am. (Wow that's early!)

Also, the Feis committee is VERY interested in having more people compete in the music competitions that are offered that day. You can compete on any instrument and in song. If you want to register, contact Kate & Jode – we may be able to get the registration late-fee "waived".

"Each competitor is required to play two Irish dance tunes in contrasting tempo. (I think they mean rythm). Competitors must provide their own instruments. No sheet music is allowed. "Misc." instrument(s) are those not previously listed. Vocal Competitions: memorized, unaccompanied traditional Irish song, sung solo or as a group." For more information see the official Feis website at <http://www.theminnesotafeis.com/> (PS – you can also submit your soda bread for judging!)

The Center for Irish Music at The Saint Paul Conservatory of Music
29 East Exchange Street, St Paul, MN 55102 651-224-2205
Kate Dowling, Center for Irish Music Director 651-493-2022
Web: www.centerforirishmusic.org email: irish.music@comcast.net

Congratulations to Colleen White – Scholarship Winner!

We are very proud of our Center for Irish Music student, Colleen White, who was honored at Milwaukee Irish Fest for winning the Edward J. Ward Irish Music Scholarship. The scholarship was established in 1989 by resolution of the Board of Directors of Irish Festivals, Inc., to honor Ed Ward, founder of the Milwaukee Irish Fest and promoter of various Irish activities in the Milwaukee area. The \$1,000 yearly scholarship is to be used for the study of Irish instrumental music or song. Applicants may be of any age or ethnic background and need not be residents of the Milwaukee area. Colleen is a fine student of tin whistle, flute and song and has studied under Kate Dowling for the last 2 years. She has spent the last two summers in Ireland furthering her study of music and plans to use the scholarship to help fund her trip in summer 2007. Congratulations to Colleen! If anyone is interested in applying for this scholarship for next year, please visit the Milwaukee Irish Fest website for application information: <http://www.irishfest.com/>



October 29: Traditional Singers Club – Special Event featuring Fintan Vallely

The Traditional Singer's Club is pleased to bring a very special guest from Ireland, Fintan Vallely, for a night of witty songs and chat. A singing workshop will also be offered. For more information on this event and on the Traditional Singer's Club, visit www.singclub.org. You may recognize Fintan Vallely's name as he is one of the premiere artists The Center for Irish Music is bringing over for the Young Irish Musicians Weekend in June 2007. Consider this your opportunity to preview the depth of knowledge and talent that Fintan has to share. We are working out details for possible music workshops – Fintan is fine flute player as well as a singer and scholar. Keep checking our website for updates on possible masterclasses in late October or early November with Fintan Vallely.

Failte Minnesota Green Tie Fundraiser Event – November 18

Failte (*fall-tcha*) means “welcome” in Irish. Failte Minnesota is a non-profit organization that is committed to establishing an Irish Community Center in Minnesota. The Green Tie Event, which is co-hosted by the Irish Music and Dance Association, will help raise funds to build a home for our local Irish heritage. Doon Ceili Band will be performing as well as The Center for Irish Music Student Ensemble. Saturday, November 18 from 6:30-11pm at St Paul College. Cost is \$100 per person. For more information visit: www.failteminnesota.org

Center for Irish Music Student Ensemble



The student ensemble had many performances this summer, including Grand Old Day in June as guests of *Irish on Grand*, Hobgoblin Celtic Festival in Redwing and upcoming performances at The Irish Fair of Minnesota Summer School and Festival in St Paul in August. One performance we are really looking forward to is a trip to Illinois for a performance at Frank O'Dowd's Pub and the Chicago Celtic Fest on the lakefront in downtown Chicago in September. One of our students will have a special report on this for our October issue. They will also be playing at the MN Feis and The Failte MN Green Tie Event as listed elsewhere in the newsletter. Check the website for photos and updates on their performance schedule.

Student performance at Grand Old Day

The Center for Irish Music at The Saint Paul Conservatory of Music
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Youth Irish Music Weekend, June 22-24, 2007



James Kelly

This summer we received confirmation from two important guest artists, Fintan Vallely and James Kelly. They will both be participating in our first ever youth weekend in June 2007.

James Kelly is one of the greatest Irish traditional fiddlers alive today. He learned his music from his father John Kelly, the renowned fiddle and concertina player from County Clare. After years of careful study and practice, James began his recording and touring career at age sixteen. That year he won first place in the prestigious "Fiddler of the Year" competition and recorded his first album, a duet with his brother John. Since that time, James has toured Europe, the US, Canada and South America, and was a member of several influential Irish groups, including "Patrick Street" and the legendary folk group "Planxty." He was a presenter of the "Pure Drop" series for Irish TV, and has also appeared with the "Chieftains." James has performed several times on Garrison Keillor's national radio show, "A Prairie

Home Companion." He recently received the prestigious "Florida Folk Heritage Award" as well as the "Florida Individual Artist Fellowship in Folk Arts Award" in recognition of his outstanding musicianship. James has 18 albums to his credit and has just released his latest recording "Melodic Journeys". He is also working on a teaching DVD for fiddle students as well as compiling his over 700 compositions for publication. He continues to tour with some of Irish music's leading accompanists.

We are very honored that James Kelly and Fintan Vallely will be making such a meaningful impact on our first attempt at the Young Irish Musicians Weekend in 2007. We heartily thank the *Irish Fair of Minnesota* for their generous grant that is enabling us to go forward and make this dream a reality. The Center for Irish Music intends to make this an annual event in St. Paul.

Instructor Spot Light: Brian Miller

Rambles magazine praises Brian Miller as a guitarist "who really understands the music [and doesn't] just play the chords". Also an accomplished flute player, Miller became interested in playing Irish music as a high-schooler up in Bemidji, Minnesota. He has lived in Saint Paul since 1998, often sneaking away to his other adopted home of Cork, Ireland. Miller began playing the flute in 2000 while studying Irish music in Cork where his first teachers were Padraig Kelleher and Conal O'Grada. As a founding member of duo *5 Mile Chase* www.5milechase.com (with fiddler Django Amerson) and *The Doon Ceili Band* www.doonceili.com (with County Offaly accordion player Paddy O'Brien) he has performed extensively throughout the Midwest. He also performs with singer Aoife Clancy and flute player Laurence Nugent on occasion. His latest venture is as guitar and vocalist with the Chicago based band *Gan Bua* www.ganbua.com. They have recently released a new cd. Brian is available for lessons on guitar, flute and tin whistle through the Center for Irish Music. He also is founder of the Traditional Singers club www.singclub.org and can make a tasty tamale – from scratch!



Family Sessions

The First Family Session of the Fall Semester will be Tuesday, October 3, 6:30-8pm in the recital hall.

Webpage

Don't forget – we have a new website! Keep yourself up-to-date at www.centerforirishmusic.org

As always

Please contact us if you have any questions about anything! Kate & Jode Dowling 651-493-2022 and irish.music@comcast.net