

“The Pure Drop”

Although long-time friends, this lineup was literally “blown together” by stormy weather in October of 2012. Their signature is “pure drop” Irish traditional music played in traditional style.

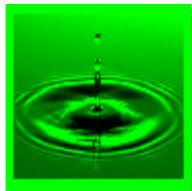
Seven-time All-Ireland button-box champion JOHN WHELAN was named “Traditionalist of the Year” by Irish Echo magazine in 2011. In receiving that award, John won high praise from Celtic music authority Earle Hitchner: “As an instrumentalist, composer, producer, and arranger who brings both passion and playfulness to his music while respecting the tradition it's rooted in. John Whelan has richly earned the Irish Echo's highest honor for traditional music.” At age 14, already a seasoned winner of numerous accordion championships, John recorded his first album. Named in honor of his father, *Pride of Wexford* was no passing fancy - the album is still in print and selling steadily. His music has since been used for productions on HBO, the History Channel, NBC, FOX, PBS, and in several major motion pictures. His new CD, *Passage of Time*, includes 33 of his compositions and includes a long list of top guest musicians, including *Seamus Egan, Seamus Connolly, Felix and Brendan Dolan, Cillian Vallely, Jerry O'Sullivan* and *Winifred Horan* (to name but a few)—it reads like a who's-who of traditional music in America.

Premier Irish-American fiddler BRIAN CONWAY performs with a skill, grace and force that are steeped in tradition but distinctively his own. Conway has won numerous All-Ireland fiddling competitions, and has been called one of the best fiddlers of his generation. New York born, he is a leading exponent of the highly ornamented Sligo fiddling style made famous by the late Michael Coleman and passed on to him by legendary Martin Wynne and fiddle great Andy McGann. Brian remains faithful to the rich tradition handed down to him—the distinctness of his tone, the lift of his playing, and the deft ornamentation he brings to the tunes have placed him among the finest Irish fiddlers of any style, Sligo or otherwise. His talents have also been enthusiastically received all over North America and throughout Ireland and the rest of Europe. His current CD, *First through the Gate*, exemplifies the versatility that characterizes his concert performances and festival appearances. He is also a noted instructor who has mentored many fine fiddle players including several who have gone on to win All-Ireland championships.

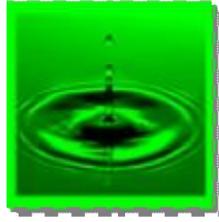
MÁIRTÍN DE CÓGÁIN is a singing, dancing, story-telling, bodhrán player. He performs in his native Ireland and all over the U.S.... and between and beyond, too! An infectious personality, Máirtín pleasantly commands the attention of any collection of people, from a concert hall to an intimate porch. Descended from a long line of storytellers and with two CCE All-Ireland's for Storytelling under his belt, Máirtín gets no more joy out of life than the telling of stories. If you are lucky enough to catch him spinning a few yarns, you are in for a treat. When touring the globe with *The Máirtín de Cógáin Project & The Fuchsia Band*, Máirtín is also a true promoter of the ballad. He is searching ever for those forgotten songs of old to give them new life, and also writes some of his own. Máirtín also is threading the boards as a playwright and actor, most notably in the film *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* and recently playing *De Bogman* off-broadway in NY. Growing up in a house full of dancing, Máirtín could not but help teach the steps at the family run Céilís from an early age, and a gifted teacher of Cork's folk dances he is.

Accompanist DON PENZIEN has long been a top-flight performer of traditional Irish music. He frequently tours nationally playing concerts and festivals with *The Máirtín de Cógáin Project, The John Whelan Band, Legacy, Captain Mackey's Goatskin and String Band*, and now with *The Pure Drop*. Don's dexterous work on DADGAD guitar provides solid, driving rhythms to traditional tunes as well as perceptive and sensitive accompaniments to songs and airs. When called upon, he also adds whistle, bodhran and vocals to arrangements.

Bookings: Don Penzien
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The lineup for this new configuration includes:

- Seven-time All-Ireland button-box champion JOHN WHELAN named “Traditionalist of the Year” by Irish Echo magazine brings both passion and playfulness to his music while respecting the tradition.
- Called one of the best fiddlers of his generation, All-Ireland fiddler BRIAN CONWAY performs with a skill, grace, and force that are steeped in Sligo style tradition but distinctively his own.
- Cork born MÁIRTÍN DE CÓGÁIN, the singing, dancing, bodhrán player who also happens to be an All-Ireland champion storyteller. Máirtín pleasantly commands the attention of any collection of people with his infectious personality.
- Accompanist DON PENZIEN who has long been a top-flight performer of Irish traditional music and frequently tours nationally playing concerts and festivals with top Irish talent.

