

Tomáseen Foley's A Celtic Christmas

BIOGRAPHIES

TOMÁSEEN FOLEY: Director, Seanchaí

tomaseenfoley.com

Tomáseen Foley grew up on a small farm in the remote parish of Teampall an Ghleanntáin in the West of Ireland - where storytelling 'was as natural as breathing.' Each year from Thanksgiving through the Christmas season, his show, Tomáseen Foley's A Celtic Christmas, plays to critical acclaim and packed concert halls all over the US – from California to Maine. In conjunction with the Omaha Symphony and other orchestras, he performs in Celtic Journey - as well as occasional performances with Apollo's Fire, the Cleveland Baroque Orchestra. He has released two CDs: A Celtic Christmas: Parcel From America, and a live recording, The Priest and the Acrobat. "He is a master of the Irish narrative and a keeper of the flame for a priceless piece of Irish culture." - Rego Irish Records tomaseenfoley.com

WILLIAM COULTER: Music Director, Guitar

williamcoulterguitar.com

Music Director William Coulter is an internationally acclaimed master of the steel-string guitar. In 2005, he won a Grammy for a track he contributed a solo guitar compilation of Henry Mancini tunes, called *Pink Guitar*. He has been performing and recording traditional Celtic and American folk music for 25 years. The most recent of his seven CDs on the Gourd Music label is the acclaimed solo album, *The Road Home*.

BRIAN BIGLEY: Uilleann Pipes, Irish Flute, Whistles, Traditional Irish Dance

brianbigleymusic.com

Brian Bigley has studied the uilleann pipes for nearly thirty years as a player, as well as a maker, of the instrument. He has toured North America and Europe extensively as both a musician and a dancer, appearing in shows such as the Omaha Symphony's 'Celtic Journey' and the Apollo's Fire Production 'Christmas on Sugarloaf Mountain' - the recording of which made it to number three on the Billboard Charts. Brian competed with great distinction at the World Irish Dance Championships and has placed second in the senior uilleann piping competition at the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil. Recently, he has produced and is touring a brand-new show called

'Rambling House.' Brian now lives near Cleveland, Ohio, with his fiddler wife, Kristen, and their dancing children, James and Kathleen.

EIMEAR ARKINS: Multi-Instrumentalist, Singer, Irish Dance

eimeararkins.com

Eimear Arkins is a multi-instrumentalist, singer and dancer from County Clare, in the west of Ireland. She holds eleven solo All-Ireland *Fleadh Cheoil* titles and has competed in all Ireland, European and World Dance Championships. She has toured with *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* throughout Ireland, Britain, North America and Canada, and represented Ireland in France at *Rennes Expo*; in Spain in *La Noche Negra*, in Shanghai, China at *World Expo 2010*, and in Milan, Italy at *World Expo 2015*. Her new solo album is entitled *What's Next*.

MARCUS DONNELLY: Irish Dance

From Ireland to Luxembourg and from Moscow to Paris, Marcus Donnelly's leading performances with shows such as *Ragús*, *Rhythm of the Dance*, *Celtic Legends*, and most recently in the U.S. with *Celtic Crossroads*, have created one of the most exhilarating, truly creative Irish dancers performing anywhere today. He first started dancing at the age of ten, in second-hand dance shoes his father bought for fifteen shillings on a visit to Dublin, and went on to compete with distinction in the All-Ireland and World Dance Championships before becoming a full-time professional dancer at the age of sixteen.

NATALIE WAGNER: Irish Dance

Natalie Wagner started Irish dancing at the age of twelve and immediately fell in love with the art. She competed with great distinction in Regional and North American Irish Dance Championships, including competitions in Canada and Ireland. Her passion for dance led to further education in Ballet and Modern Dance and she is most excited to be dancing in Tomáseen Foley's *A Celtic Christmas*.