

DANNY O'FLAHERTY Celtic Balladeer

Artist Profile

"Danny O'Flaherty continues to grow on the Irish people. Wherever he performs, his audience is amazed. Through his music, Danny helps keep alive the stories and traditions of an ancient culture and a simpler time. Danny might be American based, but he is very much an Irishman."

-Personalities, The Entertainment Magazine, Ireland

Danny's success as an entertainer is driven by his dedication to preserving and passing on his Celtic heritage. His first language is Gaelic, and his first love is the ancient music played and sung around the peat fires. Danny evokes the often indistinguishable link between history and myth. Whether singing the timeless songs of Galway fisherman or performing his own contemporary ballads, Danny O'Flaherty remains true to his Celtic roots. Danny's journey, much like that of the traveling troubadours and wandering minstrels, is akin to navigating the intricacies of a Celtic maze. As the last of a generation reared in the isolation of a pure Gaelic culture, Danny's youth was spent fishing off the cliffs and learning to row a currach with his uncle. Despite the hardships and challenges, it is a lifestyle Danny cherishes, and a heritage he is proud to proclaim.

"O'Flaherty is one of those performers who are able to hear the voices of muses that are completely inaudible to the rest of us. Probably the most difficult thing for any entertainer to do is to enfold the audience and lead them in the gentlest possible way in whatever path the muses might lead. O'Flaherty has this gift and it seems to give off a bit of a shine, a glow, as he performs."

-Ray Blum, The Lafayette Advertiser, Louisiana

Danny has traveled far from his boyhood home in the farthest reaches of the Irish west. In 1967, Danny left his home in Ardmore for London. On weekends his well-calloused hands, honed by years of rowing, fishing and digging the peat for the family hearth, now served as a means of earning a living as a construction worker. On the weekends, these same "tools of the trade" were set free to weave their magic with a tin whistle, harmonica or accordion in small pubs throughout London. In 1969, Danny set his sights on a career in the United States, arriving in Chicago he picked up construction work once again but the lure of Irish music was never far off. In 1971, he successfully auditioned for the Irish Minstrels and for the next three years he played with them on their national tour, recording two albums along the way. In 1974, Danny set out on his own once again and has continued to "pass the music on" for the last thirty-two years, sometimes as part of a group and other times as an individual performer.

From the steps of the United States Capital performing with folksinger Pete Seeger, to a concert at the National Cathedral for Pope John Paul II's visit to the United States, and a featured performance for former President Ronald Reagan's Inaugural Ball, Danny has shared the folksongs and heartfelt music of his Gaelic roots. In 1984, Danny, his brother Patrick and friend, Noel Nash, set out for New Orleans to play for the World's Fair. Captivated by the charm and Irish history in Louisiana, they decided to make it their home. O'Flaherty's Irish Channel Pub opened and for over 15 years it was a cultural icon in the French Quarter. The hub of all things Celtic in Louisiana. The devastation that Hurricane Katrina had on New Orleans made it impossible to keep O'Flaherty's open. This led Danny to a new chapter in his life and has given audiences around the country the unique opportunity to experience his rich soulful voice as he performs his timeless ballads.

"We can keep alive the richness and beauty of a well-played harp, tin whistle, fiddle, bagpipe or accordion; we can savor a story well-told, a ballad well sung; we can appreciate a handmade craft, and an athlete's prowess as he rows a currach or tosses a caber. To move forward into the future, we must know our past."

- Danny O'Flaherty

Danny's songs range from deep and soulful to silly and poetic. He has even written a wide range of children's music. To hear him tell it he is just a simple Bard doing what has been done throughout the ages. But it only takes a moment of hearing him sing to know that he is much more special than that. His vocal talent knows no bounds as he sings one style of music as beautifully as the next. From songs of the sea and glen to aching calls for tolerance and peace, Danny O'Flaherty's universal appeal as an artist rests on an unswerving commitment to the Celtic people throughout the world. This contemporary Celtic balladeer emulates the honored bards carrying on a centuries' old tradition with every passionate note. Daniel J. O'Flaherty, storyteller, singer, songwriter, musician, is a man on a mission.