

# altan <sup>\*25th Anniversary</sup>

“Altan continues to be one of the Celtic world’s great treasures, gifted with a front line that is sheer powerhouse.”

LA TIMES

“More than any Irish group, this Donegal quintet is seen as keeper of the traditional flame.”

THE BOSTON GLOBE



Altan celebrates their 25th Anniversary in the 2010-2011 season! Over those twenty-five years the group has established themselves as one of the most important live acts to play traditional Irish music in Ireland and on the world stage.

Founding members, the late Frankie Kennedy and his partner Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, lead singer and fiddler with the band, began their musical career while teaching in a school in Malahide in North County Dublin, playing music for fun and enjoyment not knowing that it would end up as their main way of life. Frankie and Mairéad started out by playing with and meeting older musicians from the Donegal tradition - John Doherty, Con Cassidy, James Byrne, Dinny McLaughlin, Vincent Campbell and Mairéad's own father Francie, who shared their music with them and most importantly, their friendship. The pair learned from them, tried to emulate their style and listened to their general philosophy of life, which, in retrospect was just as important as the music. As that original duo grew into the current quintet, Altan has managed to imbue a freshness of approach to their work that redefines and reinvigorates the tradition. Altan's material is proof that the rich and venerable tradition of Irish music continues to develop and evolve and has never been better placed to continue to charm and excite audiences all over the world.

Altan has also proven to be important ambassadors of the music and culture of Ireland, so much so that they were invited to accompany Irish President, Mary McAleese on several state visits. They performed at the White House twice for President Bill Clinton, and played again for him when he visited Ireland. In 2006, the Irish government honored the band by putting them on an official Irish postage stamp, one of the highest honors bestowed upon any living artist in Ireland.

Over the years, the group has performed in some of the most prestigious venues in the world - The Sydney Opera House, The Hollywood Bowl, The Royal Albert Hall, The Alte Opera Frankfurt, The Greek Theatre Los Angeles and many, many more. They have played music and recorded with The Chieftains, Dolly Parton, Bonnie Raitt, Alison Krauss, and Ricky Skaggs to name but a few. The band has consistently gained gold and platinum status in Ireland with their record sales, and they have won numerous awards in the music business as one of the most popular bands playing traditional folk and world music in the world.

In recent years Altan has been exploring and developing orchestral arrangements of their most popular pieces, and are now available to perform with you local symphony. The arrangements have been scored by the highly respected arranger, Fiachra Trench and have been performed with the Ulster Orchestra, The RTÉ Concert Orchestra and with the Royal Scottish Opera Orchestra.

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