

The Banner Features

Lúnasa starts off Celtic Series with Irish music

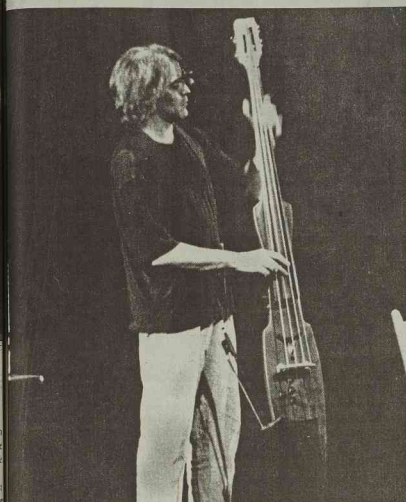


PHOTO BY ANTHONY GRECO

By Kay Alton
Staff Writer

If you are expecting all Irish music to be a celebration like "Riverdance" or "Lord of the Dance," Lúnasa will be a disappointment.

The traditional Irish music of the new band Lúnasa, (named after Lugh, the Irish god of light) was the opening performance of The Mainstage Celtic Series at the Diana Wortham Theatre on Feb. 26.

Although the band members are extremely talented, the numerous reels and jigs sounded just alike. Kevin Crawford, the flautist and tambourine-drummer, was the spokesman for the band.

Each new musical piece was introduced with delightfully genuine and wholesome Irish humor. Crawford used each introduction to make light of their musical aptitude.

His joking was one of the few light moments of Lúnasa's performance. The tunes were spirited but not engaging. This audience was one of the more subdued of any concert I have attended.

During Lúnasa's vigorous execution of several tunes, Crawford encouraged the audi-

ence to join in if they were so inclined. None were inclined.

Crawford gave some indication of pleasure by removing his shoes and shuffling a bit on stage during the performance. His was the only demonstration of Lúnasa inspiring someone to be moved by the traditional songs.

His performances were extremely vigorous, using several different styles of flutes and whistles. The flute solos were also wistfully beautiful, much like some Native American music.

Some of the pieces were introduced as Spanish and French. With Donogh Hennessy on the guitar, Crawford playing the whistle or flute, Sean Smyth playing the fiddle, Trevor Hutchinson on bass, and Cillian Vallely on the pipes, it still sounded like traditional Irish music.

I enjoyed the novel instruments such as the very slender bass and the Irish bagpipes. There is no question that Lúnasa's band exhibited genuine and enduring talent. However, the five musicians never held the audience's interest with titles like "Jimmy Ward," "Lizzie Kelly" and "The

Taproom." It was the case of a repertoire not well-suited to the crowd.

Before this concert, the fiddle, flute and pipes were familiar sounds in ancient and modern popular Scottish and Irish music. "Jim McGill" was a heavy-duty duel between the guitar and fiddle, and was joined by the bass in a highlight of the concert.

Lúnasa is Ireland's "fastest rising" traditional band, and is in demand throughout the world. Lúnasa has performed in the United States and Canada, as well as the United Kingdom and Europe.

Lúnasa band members have been playing with other Irish super groups for many years. Hutchinson played with "The Waterboys," Hennessy with "The Sharon Shannon Band" and Crawford with "Moving Cloud," before combining to form Lúnasa.

The band signed an international record contract with Green Linnet Records and released their studio album, "Otherworld," in October 1999. Compact disc sales appeared moderately brisk during intermission.

Some of the audience exhibited green, pink and rainbow hair coloring, perhaps following some of the ancient Celtic trends. A good diversity of ages and

genders listened to the concert with little emotion, except at the end.

Lúnasa received a standing ovation with at least one person demanding, "Encore, encore!"

When the music ended, the audience leapt to their feet and began whistling and hooting, along with spirited hand clapping, in an energetic display of approval.

They had either just awakened, or were much more into the concert than some of us. Attendance was a sellout. We in the audience were uncomfortably close in the overheated auditorium. Perhaps the stuffy theater and very warm temperature attributed to the subdued concert experience.

One audience member commented that he now knew why the Irish have such a reputation for drinking hard whiskey—implying that the monotony of the music and the constant impact of the shrill sounds on its hearers would be best enjoyed while the senses were dulled.

The Celtic music concert series is sponsored by The Swannanoa Gathering at Warren Wilson College. Two concerts will be presented at Pack Place in the spring.

On March 25, the Altan band will perform and on June 2, Derwish. Tickets are available at the Diana Wortham ticket office.

Review

Lúnasa, an Irish band, performed at the Diana Wortham Theatre on Feb. 26. The performance was the first of the theater's Mainstage Celtic Series.

academic notices

- LSAT Prep Program, cost \$300 (includes study materials), register by 3/3 (x6558); meets every Wed. for 8 weeks, 6-9 pm, UNCA Campus • 3/15-5/3
- GRE Prep Program, cost \$300 (includes study materials), register by 3/3 (x6558); meets every Tues. for 8 weeks, 6-9 pm, UNCA Campus • 3/14-5/2
- Spring Break • 3/6-10

athletics

- Women's & Men's Basketball Big South Conference Tournament, Asheville Civic Center • 3/2-3/4
- Women's & Men's Tennis vs. Elon, 2 pm • 3/11
- Men's Baseball vs. Indiana/Purdue, 2 pm • 3/16
- Men's Baseball vs. East Tennessee State, 2 pm • 3/22

career opportunities/jobs

- Career Center Webpage - www.unca.edu/career; job listings available or visit WHC; job openings, in Career Resources Library
- To be notified of part-time job openings via e-mail, e-mail kdceller@unca.edu
- WNC Consortium Job Fair, Registration/Resume Deadline, WHC • 3/2
- College Television Network • \$250 a semester • call Becky 1-800-586-4636

concerts/live entertainment

- "The Slow Way Back," a reading by Judy Goldman, LF, 7 pm • 3/2
- UNCA Concert Band and UNCA Brass Ensemble, Lipinsky, 7:30 pm • 3/23
- Singer/Songwriter Meghan Cary, (spon. by UPI), HCL, 9 pm • 3/15
- Afro-Cuban All Stars, Lipinsky, 8 pm • 3/21

etc.

- Faculty Senate Meeting, RL, 3:15 • 3/2
- America Reads - Read Across America Day - Volunteer to visit one of the schools, call x6536 • 3/2

exhibits

- Seth Goodman Exhibition, University Gallery, OH • thru 3/14
- Dorothy Hartsack Exhibition, 2nd Floor Gallery, OH • thru 3/7
- Asheville YWCA photos, newspaper clippings, documents from 1907 to present, RL • thru 3/21
- Alicia Chatlam Exhibition, University Gallery, OH • 3/17-4/4
- Alli Randleman Exhibition, 2nd Floor Gallery, OH • 3/10-3/21
- "Image to Image: Woman to Woman - Inspired Textile Work," Blowers Gallery, RL

health & fitness center

- Soccer & Softball Officials Clinics, HFC 205, 8 pm • 3/14

leadership opportunities

- RA applications, Housing Office, questions? call Melanie x6700 • due 3/14
- Student Activities Interns for Summer/Fall/Spring call x6674 for more info

lectures/workshops

- "How much do you know about the Internet?" - a lecture about the Internet, viruses, chat, MP3s, hacking and more, HCL, 9 pm • 3/2
- "Deconstructing the Stereotypes of Rural Appalachian Religion through the Examination of Four Modern Appalachian Novels," MLA defense by Sarah McVoy, LF, 10 am • 3/2
- "The Second Bombing of Pearl Harbor: The Story of Operation K," MLA defense by Steve Horn, LF, 1 pm • 3/2
- Great Decisions 2000: "Middle East Realignments: New Decisions for the Next Millennium?" Dr. Thomas Sanders, OCC, 7:30 pm • 3/6
- Great Decisions 2000: "The Euro's Challenge to the Dollar: King Kong vs. Godzilla?" OCC, 7:30 pm • 3/13

outdoor programs - HC (x6001)

- Sky Diving, \$75 (includes transportation & jump fee) • 3/25
- Equipment Rental - backpacks, sleeping bags, tents, mountain bikes, HC I)

tickets - discounts - hc 27 - 10 am to 4 pm

- Afro-Cuban All Stars, \$5/students • 3/21
- Asheville Art Museum, \$3
- Biltmore House, \$22
- Chimney Rock, \$6
- Smoke Hockey tickets, \$4 • 3/10, 3/11, 3/22
- United Artists Theatre Movie tickets, \$4
- Student Rush \$5 Ticket - to Diana Wortham Theatre Mainstage events, call 257-4530 for availability

women's history month

- Opening Celebration: "Murder Not Then the Fruit of My Womb: Shakespeare's Joan, Foxe's Guernsey Martyr and Women Pleading Pregnancy in Early Modern English History and Culture," Dr. Carole Levin, LF, 3:30 pm, reception will follow • 3/2
- Western Carolina Women's Coalition Conference 2000, \$35, questions? Call Pamela Nickless x6122 • 3/3-3/4
- Blowers Gallery opening reception, "Image to Image: Woman to Woman - Inspired Textile Work," Blowers Gallery, RL, 6-9 pm • 3/6
- "Asheville's Remarkable Women" by Gwen Ashburn, 12:15 pm, LF • 3/13
- "It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Academy" by Alice Weldon, 12:15 pm, LF • 3/14
- "Imaginary Landscapes" by Virginia Derryberry • 3/15
- "Deadbeat Dads, Deadbeat State..." by Sarah Judson, 12:15 pm, PDR • 3/16
- Brochures of the entire month's events in Karpen Hall 126

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