

Gaelic Storm performs at Porter Center

The genre expanding Celtic band delighted a sellout crowd at the Porter Center last Thursday evening

by Will Byers
Arts & Life Editor

Last Thursday night the Porter Center greeted the return of the lively Celtic outfit, Gaelic Storm. Eight years since their previous performance at Brevard College, Gaelic Storm's return was welcomed with a house full of students and community members that enthusiastically received the songs and antics of the five-piece band.

Gaelic Storm first achieved popular status after their memorable appearance

as the Irish steerage band in the 1997 film Titanic. They've been touring tirelessly since their big-screen debut, averaging over 125 shows a year in various countries around the world.

With albums topping the Billboard world music charts, it's no accident that they've snowballed into their current critical and popular acclaim. Each musician is highly talented with a variety of traditional instruments (Uilleann pipes, bodhrán, cajón, tin whistle); as well, they displayed a genuine love of showmanship made even more effective by their obvious chemistry.

The charismatic group delivered over two hours of original songs that ranged from humorous (e.g. "The Night I Punched Russell Crowe in the Head", true story!) to powerful (e.g. three drum finale, fiddle/bag pipe duet). Band founders Patrick Murphy, the brave lad who "dalked" Maximus in the head, and Steve Twigger quipped and entertained throughout the show, bringing even the inert older crowd out of their shells by the end of the night.

A few brave dancers out of the audience got their jig on, and despite some amusing attempts, one had to admire their determination

to have a good time. After all, though Gaelic Storm may be able to conquer the stoic, cerebral concertgoers, it was apparent they prefer playing to a readily boisterous, moving crowd.

The band invited the audience to join them at Dugan's Irish Pub after the show, many accepting this invitation. This reviewer caught the spirit, then inexplicably ended up in another favorite pub, but decided it was the revelry that really counted. It would've been great to meet them, as they inspired one of the better nights of drinking in recent memory, but I suspect they'll return in top-form before too long.

In all, Brevard was treated to high-spirited fiddling, robust bag piping, mighty hand-drumming, and even a taste of wooden spoon wizardry, all within the marvelous acoustics of the Porter Center's concert hall. Check out Gaelic Storm's latest release, "What's the Rumpus?" over at Rockin' Robin's or poke around YouTube for some nifty videos.



photo courtesy M. Newton



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