



## **CLANNAD**

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**ATLANTIC RECORDS PRESS RELEASE**

**"We are a fusion of various styles of music, growing out of a traditional Gaelic root."**

**Ciarán Brennan**

Family and place are the very essence of the Irish quartet Clannad. Originally named "an clann as Dobhar," which means "family from Dore," they soon became known simply as Clannad. Born and raised in Gweedore Donegal in the Northwest of Ireland, the group consists of two siblings - Máire (pronounced 'Moya') Brennan, her brother Ciarán (pronounced Keer-in) Brennan, and their twin uncles, Pádraig (pronounced Pwarig) and Noel Duggan.

With haunting songs, mesmerizing vocals, and a captivating sound that blends elements of traditional Irish and modern popular music, the award-winning group has sold over a million records worldwide. "ANAM," Clannad's first album for Atlantic, boasts 12 exceptional songs: ten new tracks plus, as a special bonus, two of the group's best-known tunes - 1982's "Harry's Game" which is prominently featured in the current motion picture Patriot Games, and 1986's "In A Lifetime," a duet with U2's Bono.

Ciarán and Máire's father, Leo Brennan, formed a show band in the '50s, playing popular tunes on saxophone and clarinet and highland reels on the accordion. Their mother is a music teacher who plays organ and harmonium, and their maternal grandparents were village schoolteachers steeped in old songs and ancient Irish folklore.

When he saw that his band's days were numbered, Leo acquired an old tavern in the area, where he still entertains today. "*The house was always open to music,*" states Máire. "*What this meant to us was a small stage to perform on.*" The band's genesis came when Máire (on vocals and Irish harp), Ciarán (on double bass and vocals), their brother Pól (on whistles, flute, and vocals), Noel (on guitar), and Pádraig (on mandolin and harmonica) would come up on stage to join Leo in a song. Soon the quintet was performing on its own. A typical set would range from The Beatles, to a traditional song, to Donovan, to a Joni Mitchell song in Gaelic.

In 1970, Clannad won first prize in the prestigious Letterkenny Folk Festival, which included the opportunity to record an album. "*We went into the festival for a bit of fun,*" recalls Ciarán, "*and to our surprise, we won.*"

The group went on to record six traditional albums, developing their voices and creating the Clannad sound in the process. It was in Berlin in 1976, during the group's first European tour, that a standing ovation convinced Clannad to turn professional. In 1980, the siblings' sister Enya joined the line-up, singing and playing keyboards in the band for the next two years. She performed on two of Clannad's traditional albums, "CRANN ÚLL" and "FUAIM," before leaving the group to pursue a solo career.

Clannad's big break came in 1982, when they were asked to compose the theme for "Harry's Game", a three-part television thriller about Northern Ireland. The song, which was sung in Gaelic, reached the top five of the

British charts that November. "Harry's Game" was also nominated for a BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) award, and received the Ivor Novello award, England's equivalent of the Grammy.

In 1983, Clannad released "MAGICAL RING," which was comprised primarily of Clannad originals plus a few traditional songs. The album remained on the U.K. album charts for over six months, earning the group their first gold record award.

After a lengthy European tour, Clannad returned to the studio to begin working on songs for the television series, Robin Of Sherwood. Aside from the resulting album, entitled "LEGEND" Clannad also wrote and performed the entire score for all 26 episodes. In 1985, the group received the British Academy Award for best soundtrack of the year, and the "LEGEND" album earned the group their second U.K. gold award. By that time, U2 was using "Harry's Game" as the exit music for their live performances.

Clannad's next album, 1986's "MACALLA" (which means "echo" in Gaelic), yielded the hit single, "In A Lifetime." a duet between U2's Bono and Máire, the song hit the charts as Clannad undertook a 23-date, SRO English tour. 1987's "SIRIUS" was recorded in London and Wales, and mixed in Los Angeles. Produced by Greg Ladanyi and Russ Kunkel, the album featured guest appearances by Steve Perry, Bruce Hornsby, and J.D. Souther.

Clannad embarked on their first world tour a six-month trek in February of 1988. taking in Ireland, the U.K., Australia, and the U.S. The latter half of '88 saw the group composing and recording the music for Atlantic Realm, a BBC-Television natural history series. "PASTPRESENT", a retrospective album released in 1989, garnered English platinum for the group, and hit the top ten on the U.K. charts. Following the album's release, Pól left the band to pursue solo interests.

Gaelic for "soul," "ANAM" marks a return to the traditional side of Clannad. 10 tracks were produced by Ciarán, who wrote or co-wrote 11 of the album's 12 songs. "ANAM" is a showcase for Clannad's many musical facets: Ciarán's vocal, double bass, electric bass, and guitar work; Máire's entrancing vocals and harp; Pádraig's mandola, harmonica, and acoustic guitar playing; and Noel's guitarmananship.

In addition to the aforementioned "In A Lifetime" and "Harry's Game," the

album features the majestic “Ri Na Cruinne” and the haunting “Úirchill An Chreagáin,” two songs in Gaelic; “Wilderness” and “Dobhar,” two instrumentals; the jazz-inflected “Why Worry?”; the indelible “Love And Affection”; and the country-tinged “You're The One,” with its sweet dobro riffs.

*“We wanted to record “ANAM” very quickly,” says Máire. “It was a challenge to write and record an album within a short space of time. We tend to approach every album differently in order to keep extending our horizons.”* An uplifting taste of true Irish soul, “ANAM” showcases this ground-breaking group at their captivating best.

**From the unofficial Clannad website: [www.clannad.org.uk](http://www.clannad.org.uk)**  
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