



## CLANNAD

PASTPRESENT : PRESS RELEASE 10/1989

[www.clannad.org.uk](http://www.clannad.org.uk)

### RCA RECORDS PRESS RELEASE

**“There are two very hard things for a band that's just starting off; one is writing material and the other is finding your own sound. We didn't have to write material because we drew so much from songs that have been around for hundreds of years and, as for our sound, we never thought of it. That developed from our arrangements and became something we were unaware of.”**

Máire Brennan

Clannad's roots go deeper and further back than Gweedore on the West Coast of Ireland. Their musical tree extends backwards and sideways through parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles in a maze that would confuse the most diligent of researchers. But Gweedore is at the epicenter of Clannad's music and like the music, it has no definable core: a patterned collection, with its own lore and logic, it is nowhere and everywhere. That

same combination is the open-mindedness that fuses Clannad -- and the basis of their new RCA Records album, PAST PRESENT. The album is a compilation of the band's very best work -- including some songs from the many BBC scores/soundtracks they have done -- from their five LPs. It also contains one newly-recorded song, "A World Of Difference."

Clannad (which, literally translated, is the Gaelic word for "family") formed in 1976 as a four-piece intent on entering local festivals. "*At that point, Pól [Brennan] was singing and playing guitar,*" explains Máire Brennan, lead singer for the band. "*I was learning the harp, but I wasn't too interested because it gave me a Mary O'Hara image. The band used to practice in my father's [noted Irish band leader Leo Brennan's] bar. We had to do eight minutes for this contest and thought we'd do an instrumental. So I said, 'I know a piece: Brian Boru's March On Harp.' Actually, it was the only piece I knew. So, suddenly, that night in the bar, I was in the band and lead singer as well!*"

From these tentative beginnings Clannad have been at the very forefront of Irish music. A clutch of domestic-only releases earned them the opportunity to score a series for Yorkshire television. "Harry's Game," released in October of 1982, reached the Top five in Britain and earned the group an Ivor Novello Award in 1983 for Best TV Theme. It was followed by Clannad's debut album, MAGICAL RING, which, after being a bestseller in Britain for over six months, went gold.

After a lengthy European tour, Clannad returned to the studio to start work on songs for the Goldcrest/HTV series, "Robin of Sherwood." Aside from the resulting album, LEGEND, Clannad also wrote and performed all of the atmospheric pieces for the 26 episodes. In February of 1985, the band received a British Academy Award for the best soundtrack of the year. In accepting, they became the first Irish group to win this prestigious award; they remain the only band to be nominated twice, the first time being for "Harry's Game." LEGEND, itself, matched its predecessor's success, earning the band a second gold disc. Indeed, by this time, "The Theme From Harry's Game" was well known to concert-goers on a global level. U2 had been (and still are) using the song as each of their shows closes.

Clannad used the rest of 1985 to record their album, MACALLA. Released in January of 1986, the album spawned another hit single, "In A Lifetime." Featuring U2's Bono duetting with Máire, it charted as the group undertook

a 28-date, sold-out British tour.

The start of 1987 saw the band back in the studio again and the beginnings of a new record, SIRIUS. Sessions took place in London as well as Wales prior to Clannad taking off for Los Angeles where the record was mixed. Released in October of that year, SIRIUS was produced by Greg Ladanyi and Russ Kunkel and features quest musicians Bruce Hornsby, Steve Perry and J.D. Souther.

Shortly after, the band embarked on a sold-out world tour before going back in the studio to record the music for their next project, a three-part BBC series, "Atlantic Realm."

Now, with the release of PASTPRESENT, their new greatest hits record, and Máire & Bono's single once again charting on the British charts, Clannad has announced plans to do some performance dates in November.

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