

PRESS RELEASE

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August 4, 5, 6, 2006 newport rhode island

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For Immediate Release:

UPDATED July 28, 2006

**Ronan Tynan & Cherish The Ladies
To Open 2006 Dunkin' Donuts® Newport Folk Festival
at Newport Casino
Friday, August 4
Tickets Are On Sale Now**

Newport, RI--Newport festival impresario George Wein has announced that this year's Dunkin' Donuts® Newport Folk Festival will kick off with a new twist: "Irish Night at Newport" featuring **Ronan Tynan** and Irish traditional music and dance ensemble **Cherish The Ladies**. This wonderful evening will take place at 8 pm under the stars on Centre Court at the International Tennis Hall of Fame [194 Bellevue Avenue] on Friday, August 4. Tickets at \$75.00, \$60.00, \$45.00 and \$30.00 are on sale now via Ticketweb at <http://www.Ticketweb.com/>, by phone at 866-468-7619 and at the Newport Festival office located at 770 Aquidneck Avenue in Middletown, Rhode Island; cash, checks and major credit cards are accepted. Call 401-847-3700 for more information.

People already know **Ronan Tynan's** voice. Tynan sang at a key game by the New York Yankees, for the New York Police Department and New York Fire Department after 9/11, for the Belmont Stakes, at Rudy Giuliani's wedding at Gracie Mansion and for the 80th birthday of former President George H.W. Bush. He also frequently appears at Feinstein's, one of New York's poshest cabaret rooms. Tynan follows the tradition of the great Irish tenor, John McCormack.

In the Spring of 2005, he released his new self-titled CD, the first in a new exclusive agreement with Universal Music's Decca label, beginning a new chapter in his amazing story.

Ronan Tynan is barely out of his 30s, yet he has already overcome formidable personal challenges and achieved the kind of success only a mother could have wished for him. Though he had always sung as a boy, he did not seriously consider formal voice study until he was 33, when he was well into his residency as a physician. The success he quickly found as a singer is a typical development in a life of extraordinary achievement. Born with lower limb disability that might have sidelined him, Tynan was still "as wild as a March hare" when he was a growing boy, riding horses and racing motorcycles. When he was twenty, his legs had to be amputated below the knee after an auto accident caused serious complications. Just weeks after the operation, he was climbing up the steps of his college dorm. Within a year, he was winning gold medals in the Paralympics as a multi-talented athlete. Between 1981 and 1984, Tynan amassed eighteen gold medals and fourteen world records.

Such determination – reinforced by his steadfast parents, a diminutive couple with gigantic ambitions for their son – soon propelled him to conquer a whole new field. Tynan became the first disabled person ever admitted to the National College of Physical Education, and then a full-fledged medical doctor, specializing in orthopedic sports injuries, with a degree from prestigious Trinity College. He won both the John McCormack Cup for Tenor Voice and the BBC talent show *Go For It* less than one year after beginning the study of voice. The following year, he won the International Operatic Singing Competition in Maumarde, France. He made his operatic debut as Pinkerton in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, and cut his teeth on the concert repertoire in performances of Verdi's *Requiem*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Handel's *Messiah*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* and Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*. In 1998, Tynan joined Anthony Kearns and John McDermott (later Finbar Wright) as The Irish Tenors, an instant worldwide sensation. His autobiography *Halfway Home* was published in February of 2001.

When describing **Cherish the Ladies** – the critics say it best... "It is simply impossible to imagine an audience that wouldn't enjoy what they do," stated *The Boston Globe*; "An astonishing array of virtuosity" said the *Washington Post*; "Expands the annals of Irish music in America . . . the music is passionate, tender and rambunctious," reported *The New York Times* and for the past eighteen years, Cherish the Ladies have proven themselves worthy to live up to these accolades and in doing so have become one of the most engaging ensembles in the history of Irish music.

The group features **Joanie Madden** on flute, whistles and vocal harmony, **Heidi Talbot** on lead vocals and bodhran, **Mary Coogan** on guitar, banjo and mandolin, **Mirella Murray** on accordion and **Roisin Dillon** on fiddle.

The group has grown from a one-time concert concept to an Irish traditional music sensation, literally the most successful and sought-after Irish-American group in Celtic music. Organized by folklorist/musician Mick Moloney and sponsored by the Ethnic Folk Arts Center and the National Endowment for the Arts, they began as a concert series featuring the brightest lights in Irish traditional music. Taking their name from the name of a traditional Irish jig, the group initially won recognition as the first and only all-women traditional Irish band. In a relatively short time, they soon established themselves as musicians and performers without peer and have won many thousands of listeners and fans of their music. With their unique spectacular blend of virtuosi instrumental talents, beautiful vocals, captivating arrangements and stunning step dancing, this powerhouse group combines all the facets of Irish traditional culture and puts it forth in an immensely humorous and entertaining package.

The past years have seen the group traveling all over North and South America, the United Kingdom and Europe, Australia and New Zealand performing in the finest concert halls and international festivals. They are equally at home in front of a symphony orchestra, a performing arts center, a folk festival or even the White House.

They have been named Best Musical Group of the Year by the BBC, Entertainment Group of the Year by the Irish Voice Newspaper, the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall's International Group of the Year Award at the Celtic Connections Festival in Scotland and voted the Top North American Celtic act by NPR Radio's "Thistle and Shamrock".

They have shared the stage with such noted entertainers as James Taylor, Joan Baez, Emmy Lou Harris, The Clancy Brothers, Tommy Makem, The Chieftains and dozens of symphony orchestras. The "Celtic Album", their collaboration with the Boston Pops Symphony led to a 1999 Grammy nomination.

The Ladies have recorded ten highly acclaimed albums. They recently signed a recording contract with Rounder Records and this past December, their most recent album "On Christmas Night" was released to rave reviews and was chosen as one of the top Christmas Albums of the Year by The New York Times, Washington Post, The Village Voice and many other nationally syndicated Newspapers.

Cherish the Ladies have appeared on *CBS This Morning*, *Good Morning America*, *Evening at Pops*, C-Span, PBS and National Public Radio in the United States and on BBC and RTE radio and television overseas. At the Summer Olympics in Atlanta, they were chosen to represent Irish music and culture at the Official Cultural Olympiad.

They released their second Rounder Records CD ***Woman of the House*** in the fall of '05.

TICKETS: Tickets to the **Ronan Tynan and Cherish The Ladies** evening concert at 8 pm, August 4th at the Newport Casino, International Tennis Hall of Fame, 194 Bellevue Avenue, Newport, RI, are **\$30, \$45, \$60 and \$75.**

WHERE TO GET TICKETS:

For **NEWPORT AREA PATRONS**, the festival ticket office is located at 770 Aquidneck Avenue in Middletown. Cash, checks and major credit cards are accepted. Call **(401) 847-3700** for more information and current office hours.

All Tickets are also available at <http://www.ticketweb.com/>, by phone at **(866) 468-7619** and by mail. To order by mail send check or money order for the ticket cost plus a \$4.00 handling charge per order to: Dunkin' Donuts® Newport Folk Festival, P.O. Box 1221, Newport, RI 02840.

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- ❑ **Festival Productions, Inc.** has its own website at <http://www.festivalproductions.net/>

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