

McANINCH ARTS CENTER Mar 8, 2025



# Welcome to the MAC! Your home for entertainment.

I have worked in the performing arts for the entirety of my career and after 10 seasons at the MAC, I can unequivocally say our patrons are *Simply the Best!* The support you provide and the sense of community you have fostered make the

MAC such a special place for all who step through the doors. In honor of our patrons, the MAC is bringing you *Simply the Best* in the 2024-2025 season. Get ready for an incredible year with the best shows.

Join us for a complimentary pre-show MAC Chat or Q&A following specific performances. Our arts center, located in a community college, offers over 60 student productions supported by professional lighting, sound, and costumes. These can be enjoyed at affordable costs, or you can attend our FREE programs like Music Fridays at Noon and our free International Global Film series in February. We hope to exceed your expectations with excellent service and special pre- and post-show engagement opportunities. These will help you connect with the artists and art forms more deeply. While you are here, don't forget to visit the Cleve Carney Museum of Art in the lobby to experience cutting-edge contemporary art. You can also enjoy our full-service concession area and gift shop.

After your visit, please stay connected with us by joining us on Facebook (AtTheMAC) or subscribing to our e-newsletter to find out about added shows, events, and special offers (<u>www.AtTheMAC.org</u>). We challenge you to try something new at the MAC and expand your cultural palate. Come see the New Philharmonic Orchestra or a Buffalo Theatre Ensemble play. Or join us this summer for the Hokusai exhibit. We are grateful for your presence here and we want to ensure that your visit is enjoyable. If you need anything, please don't hesitate to ask any of the staff and we will do our best to accommodate you.

Thank you for being a part of our community of arts enthusiasts and being *Simply the Best!* We can't wait to share these unforgettable experiences with you and hope you have a wonderful time. We look forward to entertaining you and seeing you at the theater.

Enjoy the show!

Diana Martinez Director, McAninch Arts Center

McAninch Arts Center at College of DuPage presents



The McAninch Arts Center acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.



Sat, Mar 8, 2025, 7:30p Belushi Performance Hall

## ABOUT THE SHOW

This incredible live show creates a new era in Irish entertainment, containing a wealth of Irish talent, featuring World and Irish champion dancers, some of the finest traditional musicians and singers who are a big hit everywhere. Combining traditional dance and music with the most up-to-date stage technology, this two-hour dance and music extravaganza takes the audiences on an exhilarating and exciting, energy-packed time trip through the ages. It's internationally rated as one of the most popular and busiest Irish step dance shows in the world making it such a success with critics and audiences worldwide. It really is out of this world as seen by seven million people in 50 countries.

From the creation of Rhythm of the Dance in 1998 (initially the show was set up for a three week tour of the United States) it has toured consistently internationally and is achieving greater critical acclaim year after year.

This wonderful show continues to evolve thanks to the constant striving for perfection by its Director/Producer, choreographer and composer to keep the show fresh and interesting so that audiences who attend performances regularly will always find some new and exciting elements within the program.

With a wonderful, gifted young cast of dancers, musicians and singers, featuring live performances from the entire troupe, this is a show that has won critical acclaim across four continents of the world in 50 countries to over seven million fans. And now after 25 years of showcasing the very best in Irish dance to the world, the show has undergone a process of renewal, reinvigorating the choreography and music to create an even more spectacular performance. Producer Kieran Cavanagh was very excited about the updated format of the show; he hoped that Rhythm of the Dance would be a breath of fresh air into Irish dance with this traditionally rooted and authentic production.

# CAST

Curtis Long	Lead Male
Colm Brien	Lead Male
Ethan Kesby	Dancer
Eoghan Weldon	Dancer
Robert Fenner	Dancer
Stephen Gallagher	Dancer
Thomas Colangelo	Dancer
Jessica Cartwright	Lead Female
Grace Hannon	Lead Female
Molly Fitzgerald	Dancer
Maeve McPhillips	Dancer
Robyn Caffrey	Dancer
Jodie Binns	Dancer
Rebecca Byrne	Dancer
James Greenan	Choreography
Shane Moran	Musical Director
Oliver Havlin	Guitar
Kealan O'Connor	Accordion
Ciara McGoldrick	Flute
Sean Kelleher	Fiddle
Ethan Kesby	Bodhran
Oliver Havlin	Vocalist
Danielle Scharpf	Crew
Grzegorz Kozlowski	Crew
Jakub Kowaleski	Crew

# PROGRAM

Act 1 Rhythm of the Dance

The First Drop

Hornpipes

Easky's Legacy

Mná na hÉireann

Actin' the Goat

The Gathering

Exhibition

# INTERMISSION

# Act 2

A New Dawn

Erin go Bragh

The Beat of the Bodhran

Hup!

An Irish Tango

Beyond the Horizon

Boann

Adamant

The Last Drop

Parade of Champions

# Sláinte





# Eat, drink & enjoy - MAC dining partners

Coupons are only valid on performance days or nights.

For all your pre-show meals and post-show bites, we are thrilled to be partnering with these neighborhood restaurants. Our dining partners offer MAC patrons exclusive discounts and special offers. All MAC ticket orders receive coupons to these local favorite restaurants!





**Curtis Long** (Lead Dancer) who comes from Carrickfergus in Northern Ireland was born into a family who have over 55 year's experience teaching Irish Dance and it was inevitable he would become an Irish Dancer himself. At the age of five Long began dancing with Gavin and Seaneen Doherty in Belfast. He competed in many Feisanna, consistently being

placed top three and at the age of only seven, Long claimed his first title of many at the North American Championships. During a successful 14 years of competing, Curtis won two American Nationals, two British Nationals, Great Britain, All Ireland, Ulsters, Irish Nationals and European Championship Titles and since the age of nine has been Top Five in the world, finishing off his competitive career achieving a ranking of second place in the CLRG World Championships twice.

Long's greatest wish was to become a professional principal lead dancer so following his success in competitive Irish Dance he joined Rhythm of the Dance Show, and after five years of dedication and hard work he had achieved his dream role and has been Principal Lead Dancer for over a year now performing all over the world including China, Ukraine, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, America, Russia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Central Asia. Long is now a fully Qualified Irish Dance Teacher with CRDM and has joined his family teaching in The Royal Tara Dance Academy. With his impressive skills, Long has become a role model for aspiring Irish dancers worldwide.



**Colm Brien** (Lead Dancer) began dancing at the age of three in Kildare, Ireland, with a successful competitive career and winning five World Championship titles. Brien began his professional career at the age of 14 performing locally and throughout Ireland. He then went on to perform with many touring Irish Dance shows such as

Riverdance at 17 travelling all over the globe. He is delighted to assume the role of Dance Captain and male lead with Rhythm of the Dance.



Jessica Cartwright (Dance Captain & Lead Female Dancer) One of the leading female stars of the Irish Dancing show circuit! Cartwright went to her first Irish Dance class at the age of four in Antrim, Northern Ireland and was immediately hooked. She spent seven years at the Castletown School of Irish Dancing where she started off

dancing the festival style of Irish dance and later moved to Royal Tara Dance Academy, where she still helps teach and train the next generation of dancers today. Cartwright has always had a strong work ethic and relentless dedication to her dancing, where her competitive career took off and became the platform for her enviable achievements.

Over the course of her competitive career she has won multiple titles including CRDM x2 British National Championships, x3 All Ireland Championship, x2 London Championships, x3 Dublin Championships... to name only a few! Cartwright is also CRDM x2 World Champion, which is one of her most proudest and greatest achievements throughout her dancing career.

Moving on to the next stage of her career, Cartwright followed her lifetime dream to perform as a professional dancer in shows all around the world. Her favourite aspect when competing was always the performance side and always loved to put on a show on stage, this is when she knew she wanted to progress this and move into doing the shows. Cartwright has been dancing with Rhythm of the Dance for three years now and has been principle lead dancer for over a year now.

Her style, elegance and powerful dancing has entertained and captivated audiences across Europe and beyond with an intensity and passion which is second to none. In between her busy schedule, Cartwright has also completed the first part of her official teaching qualifications and she continues to be an inspiration to all of the younger dancers hoping to follow in her footsteps.



**Grace Hannon** started her Irish dancing journey at the age of 10 under the instruction of Belinda Murphy and Carla Power who are Beldance Academy in Dublin, Ireland. Throughout her competitive career, Hannon has won many championships including two Dublin Championships, three consecutive Leinster Championship

titles, and placed third in the Senior Ladies World Championships.

Hannon began her professional career in 2019 where she has performed internationally with Celtic Rhythm and Danceperados of Ireland touring Qatar, Italy, and France. She has also performed throughout Ireland with dance companies such as Prodijig, Slidestep, and studio2stage. Hannon was honored to perform with the internet sensations that are the Gardiner Brothers where she performed some of their viral choreography. In 2023 Hannon co-created Golden Beats Irish Dance Company, where she has choreographed routines for both corporate and private events.

Hannon has also had the privilege of being a featured dancer in the Netflix production 'Irish Wish' 2024 starring Lindsey Lohan.

Hannon was delighted to fulfill her dream of joining the cast of Rhythm of the Dance in 2023 and was thrilled to be invited to take on the female lead role shortly after. She looks forward to continuing her journey with Rhythm of the Dance alongside some incredible performers entertaining audiences globally.



James Greenan (Choreography) from Co. Cavan is a passionate Irish dancer and sports massage therapist. As a child, Greenan discovered his love for the art of Irish Dance in Dundalk where he was taught by the acclaimed Mona Rodaigh. He was fortunate enough to enjoy a successful competitive career having won every major

title including the coveted World championships. This sparked his love for the stage and steered his progression as a dancer into the professional arena.

Greenan spent his professional career expanding his artistry by working on various productions and alongside admired choreographers. The

most prestigious of these being Riverdance where he danced as the principal dancer for 12 years in venues such as Radio City Music Hall, New York and The 3 Arena, Dublin. Others include Heartbeat of Home [The West End, London], Eiru dance company [with Breandan de Gallai] and Prodijig's Footstorm [with Alan Kenefic].

In recent years, Greenan has explored his own creative ideologies through various platforms. These include Celtic Gold in 2019 which he choreographed and directed, and his own corporate dance company KLIX. In addition to dance, Greenan's passion for movement has expanded into other disciplines as he is also a fully qualified and experienced Sports and Myoskeletal Massage Therapist. He works primarily with dancers in helping them move pain-free, recover from injury and live long, happy and healthy careers. His practice is called Corrective Manual Therapy which is based in Dublin.

Greenan is honoured to share his creative expertise with Rhythm of the Dance and continues to entertain audiences worldwide through the Irish culture.

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# For more information

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- Brings nationally and internationally renowned artists to our community
- Supports our SchoolStage program that annually offers affordable arts experiences to thousands of schoolchildren
- Provides students and community members the opportunity to interact with artists
- Enhances quality of life in our community

Without the generous support of the Friends of the MAC, we would not be the beacon for the arts in DuPage County. We gratefully thank our friends, and we invite others to join them.

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Donor may choose to direct gifts to the Arts Center Endowment or the MAC-tastic Treat Seats – Tickets for Kids & Families Endowment. Donations made to these MAC Endowments, our "savings accounts," go into principal secured, invested accounts that will provide ongoing support for arts programs and arts accessibility for years to come.

The McAninch Arts Center and the College of DuPage Foundation can also provide you with information on planned giving options, gifts of stock, IRA Charitable Rollovers and other giving opportunities.

> For complete details, visit the MAC Box Office or contact the College of DuPage Foundation at (630) 942-3088 or foundation@codfound.org.

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Education and Community Engagement Coordinator	Mandy Rakow
Office Manager/Events Coordinator	Morgan Bainbridge
Student Clerical Assistants	Katie Aviles, Kate Cadag

#### MAC Box Office and Front of House Staff

Box Office Manager	Julie Elges
Assistant Box Office Supervisors	Daniel Arzola, Elise Wash
Box Office Assistants	Patrick Garon, Joanne Hunt
Patron Services Manager	Tom Murray
Assistant Patron Services Supervisor	Deborah Kolek
House Manager/Volunteer Coordinator	Rob Nardini

#### MAC Resident Professional Ensembles

Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, Interim Managing Artistic Director	Amelia Barrett
Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, Interim Associate Artistic Director	Daniel Millhouse
Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, Business Manager	Bryan Burke
New Philharmonic, Music Director and Conductor	Kirk Muspratt
New Philharmonic, Associate Conductor and Librarian	Benjamin Nadel
New Philharmonic General Manager	Paula Cebula
New Philharmonic Personnel Manager	Karen Dickelman
New Philharmonic Assistant Librarian	Ryan Michel

#### MAC Design and Technical Staff

Technical Production/Lighting/Sound Coordinator	Richard Arnold, Jr.
Technical Theater Supervisor	Sabrina Zeidler
Costume and Make-up Design Coordinator	Kimberly G. Morris
Assistant Costume Coordinator and Stitcher	Gretchen Woodley
Production Manager	Joe Hopper
Sound and Lighting Specialist	Ben Johnson
Lighting Production Specialist	Elias Morales
Audio Production Specialist	Fisher Parsons
Events Production Specialist/Tech. Director – BTE	Caitlyn Woods
Stage Hands	Bobby Bryan, Zak Zubka





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