

DEIRDRE SHANNON

Soprano Soloist

Official Website: www.deirdreshannon.com

Fansite: www.deirdreshannon.net

E-mail: deirdre.shannon@gmail.com

It is Deirdre's unique range of experience and style which makes her such a wonderful communicator. "Every time I see Deirdre perform I always get the impression that she is singing just for me, raved one German critic during a recent tour.

The Anglo-Celt, Ireland

"She may not be able to kick a football like her grandfather but she can hit a high 'C' from a mile off. Deirdre Shannon is one of Ireland and Cavan's best kept singing secrets"

Cork Examiner, Ireland

"Deirdre a gifted young soprano ... her rendering of Sarah Brightman's showstopper, Time to Say Goodbye, ... was exquisite"

Sunday Independent, Ireland

"If you're anything other than stunned after Deirdre has joined the tenors on stage for a performance of that haunting Moore's melody, The Last Rose of Summer, it could be time to have someone check your vital signs"

Minneapolis Dispatch, USA

"Deirdre's soprano heights rang a cappella in the rafters ... showed the classically trained opera singer's versatility"

Buenos Aires Herald, Argentina

"Deirdre ... whose beautiful singing captures pure ethereal quality especially when singing in Gaelic"

Lincoln Journal Star, USA

"... singing with the clarity heard only when fingers run on the rim of a Waterford goblet"

The Ottawa Citizen, Canada *".....three lovely traditional songs including 'She Moved Through The Fair', sung with sweet power,I'd swear she was singing to me alone"*

The Early Years

Deirdre Shannon, one of the brightest new talents to emerge on the classical cross-over scene, is the middle daughter of five children born into the "Gilsenan family" of County Meath, Ireland. She grew up on a mixed farm where she and her siblings assisted their parents with various chores associated with farm living. In her early formative years she was exposed to music from both parents who often went about their daily work either humming or singing a favourite tune.

At the age of nine her preliminary formal training began when her parents enrolled her in piano lessons. Deirdre and her brother Matthew often found themselves performing while milking the family herd of cows. "I did a lot of singing around the cows. That was the thing, you had the space and nobody could hear you sing in the milking parlour." Mr. and Mrs. Gilsenan also encouraged their children to perform in the local church choir. As her talent continued to develop, Deirdre became more involved in performing at local events such as weddings, funerals, competitions, concerts and family occasions whenever possible. At a young age, Deirdre launched a musical journey that has since led her to much celebrated praise and acclamation among her fans and critics alike.

Career Highlights

In 1992 this versatile young singer entered Dublin's renowned **College of Music** where she studied for three years under the guidance of her vocal trainer Mary Brennan. "While there I travelled to Moscow with the **Dublin Institute of Technology choir**. As part of my studies I played *Fleurette*, a character in the operetta **Christopher Columbus**, and also appeared with **Bernadette Greevy**, a renowned Irish mezzo soprano, at the National Concert Hall, Dublin." Her classical training at the **College of Music** pivotally brought her to a solo career filled with an illustrious series of achievements in critically acclaimed singing groups and shows around the world.

Her professional music career began in 1996 when she was welcomed into the exclusive Irish choir **Anúna**, where she soon became a prominent lead soloist in concerts throughout Europe. She was markedly featured on their album "*Behind the Closed Eye*" with **The Ulster Orchestra**.

Deirdre was selected in 1997 by **Michael Flatley** to sing in his internationally revered, phenomenal production **Lord of the Dance**, where she was cast as *Erin the Goddess*, dazzling audiences everywhere. She performed in over 800 shows, spanning four years extensively throughout the USA, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and Mexico, earning her critical acclaim from around the globe. She continued to perform with **Anúna** as time permitted throughout the summer of 1999 and even sang in the Proms in London during that same year. Deirdre still continues to make guest appearances with **Lord of the Dance**.

In 2002 she became the feature soloist with the esteemed Irish American pianist **Eily O'Grady** on her sell-out tour, paying tribute to Eily's late husband, Irish Tenor, **Frank Paterson**. On her return from America, Deirdre's flexible voice joined forces with **Dionne Warwick's**, on her sweeping tour of the UK, confirming her versatility in many genres of music. During that year, to the delight of 'Telecast' audiences everywhere, she also appeared in the recording of **The Celtic Tenors Special for PBS**, which aired coast to coast in America and also on prime-time German and Irish television.

Parallel to her many television appearances, in 2003 Deirdre recorded the vocal sound track for the **RTE** historical television documentary series called **The Island**. Subsequently, a release of the album, also called "*The Island*" soon followed. The following year Deirdre worked diligently on a fund raising project very dear to her, **Brian Boylan's Outreach Program** for "*the lost Irish on London's streets*". Culminated by a concert held in Cavan, Ireland, Deirdre generously made her vocal talents and organizational skills available to support the efforts to raise funds. Her benevolent work doesn't stop there, as she also provides monthly support to **Sight Savers**, sponsors a child in Uganda through **Action Aid** and currently helps raise funds for a housing project for the homeless in Tullamore, County Offaly, Ireland.

More recently, in 2005, Deirdre toured the USA as one of the featured soloists of **Celtic Woman** which remained at No.1 in the world charts for 68 weeks, earning the distinction of holding the record as the **longest running artist ever** to remain at the number one position in the **Billboard World Music Charts**. Deirdre's large contribution to the **Celtic Woman** production earned her a gold and platinum disc in the process. She left the show in February of this year to pursue her own solo career and begin work on her debut album '*Deirdre Shannon*'. This award-winning album has since been released through her official website www.deidreshannon.com.

Deirdre has sung her way into the hearts of thousands and to the present date, her lovely talent continues to summon a huge following of faithful fans from all over the globe.

Accomplishments & Future Plans

Deirdre's wide ranges of accomplishments have taken her to some of the most prestigious and spectacular stages throughout the world. Most notably **The Royal Albert Hall** in London, **The Royal Concertgebouw** in Amsterdam, **The Point Depot** in Dublin, **The Grand Old Opry** in Nashville, Tennessee, **Carnegie Hall** and **Radio City Music Hall** in New York, as well as a profusion of other venues throughout the world. Her much sought after talents have also won her performances at prestigious corporate events, such as the **United Nations Summit** held in 2005 at the **UN Headquarters** in New York, during a grand prize-giving ceremony.

Deirdre's cumulative live television appearances have included the **BBC's** major annual event, "**Music Live**", performing alongside **Bob Geldof, Brian Kennedy, Jamie Cullem** and **Moya Brennan**. Other appearances include **CBS Morning News** and **Fox Morning TV** (USA), **The Jules Holland Show** (UK), in addition to **The Late Late Show, The Gerry Kelly Show** and **Open House** on Irish television.

Considered a multi-talented crossover artist, Deirdre sings classical, traditional and contemporary Irish music, imparting her own flavour and style to each musical performance. In addition to her solo performances she has notably collaborated and earned the respect of her peers; performing and recording with a wide range of other feature artists such as the award winning, eclectic Irish songstress **Julie Feeney, The Chieftains, Michael Crawford, Elvis Costello** and more recently, **Air Supply** on their new recording of '*I'm All Out of Love*'. Deirdre has been guest soloist with the **Celtic Tenors** for the past few years and has toured with them in virtually every continent. She is featured extensively on their latest album '*We Are Not Islands*' (Ireland)/ '*Remember Me*' (Worldwide).

Her future plans incorporate filming a **televised special**, continued visits to the USA and Canada performing with the **Celtic Tenors**, and touring throughout Ireland and Europe to promote her new album.