

DANCEPERADOS OF IRELAND

AN AUTHENTIC SHOW OF
IRISH MUSIC, SONG AND DANCE



Spirit of Irish Christmas Tour

www.danceperados.com



An authentic show of Irish music, song and dance

The enthusiasm for Irish step dancing is firmly embedded in the name of the show. Dancing, singing and playing music is part of the Irish DNA and the Danceperados are no exception. They are mad to dance.

Each country has its signature way of celebrating Christmas. Ireland is no exception. The Danceperados deliver with their "Spirit of Irish Christmas show" some unique customs the Emerald Isle has to offer and leave their audiences with an overall positive impression about the Irish way of life. One of those rare customs is the Wren Boys. Young men paint their faces black and dress in costumes made out of straw. The highlight of this outfit is a decorative straw mask. The Wren Boys go from house to house and chant special songs. They carry a dead wren and the purpose of their singing is collecting money for the bird's funeral. Later they will of course drink the collection in the local pub, sing some songs and play some tunes. There is however a deeper meaning behind this. The wren symbolizes the old year coming to its end. The robin however stands for the New Year. Those rituals go back to pre-Christian times.

The „Spirit of Irish Christmas“ show reminds us that there was a different Christmas before the globalized World became dominated by the Anglo-Saxon or Walt Disney fueled images of Santa Claus. Every country had its unique way. For instance the candle was a mystical symbol going back to the times when the English suppressors banned Catholic mass celebrated in Gaelic. The candle in the window was a secret symbol for a safe place to enjoy a secret mass. There are ancient hymns and carols in the Gaelic language sung at Christmas only such as the Wexford Carol and the Danceperados made them part of the show. Celebrating Christmas is for the Irish a living tradition. There are some great new contemporary songs such as "Fairytale of New York" and are part of the show. A multivision with wintery Irish landscapes and Christmas themes integrates with music, song and dance. The audiences are spirited to the Emerald Isle at Christmas time.

In former years and indeed still now, many Irish have to earn their living abroad. Christmas is the best opportunity for all those émigrés to come home. They have not seen their families and friends for an entire year and they are delighted to celebrate together. The pubs are packed and everybody shares a drink or two together. This is always a great opportunity to play or at least hear some jigs & reels.



Some of them have even names related to Christmas such as Christmas Eve", Now you will realize that celebrating Christmas and Irish step dancing have a lot of in common.

When it comes to measuring the quality of a step dance show many focus on the dancers only. The Danceperados match it with the quality of their singers and musicians. They all enjoy highly successful solo careers, have recorded many award winning albums and are inspirational for the up and coming generation of Irish musicians. There is for instance Geraldine MacGowan who was pivotal as singer of OISIN in the folk revival of the seventies as was the renowned singer/songwriter Ian Smith. A very Christmassy instrument is the harp and with Floriane Blancke, the band features one of the leading Celtic harpists of today. The quintet is propelled forward by the dynamic drumming of Niall Carey. Last but not least, the musical director and accordion virtuoso is Eimhin Liddy, who toured Worldwide and recorded with some highly regarded shows as the Celtic Legends.

The shows choreographer is Michael Donnellan - a two time World champion. He was lead dancer with Riverdance and Lord of the Dance. He is regarded as one of the top ten Irish step dancers of his time. He embraced the challenge of not only creating impressive dance items but to adapt them to the storyline written by the artistic director Petr Pandula.

The trademark of the collective is the absence of playback which is wide spread in the other dance shows. When it is encrypted in your name that you are mad to dance, you have to do it live! Playing safe and falling back on playback is against the ethos of the Danceperados. Playback kills spontaneity and improvisation which is the beauty of Irish traditional music and dance. The media reviewing the Danceperados of Ireland reflect positively on the philosophy "keep it simple but live". Show effects, expensive light show and a massive line of dancers take away the focus from what it is all about. It is about music and dance and a meaningful storyline. Once a show is performed live, the fire and passion embedded in the DNA of the dancers and musicians spread like wild fire. Twelve dancers stepping it out live match a cast twice their size.

The Danceperados are in the fore front of a new movement striving to free the Irish dancing from the grip of the big production companies. It is not about playing safe and finding the lowest common denominator by going for a Las Vegas type of show. The Danceperados are going back to the roots and for an authentic and free spirited Irish feel. Media and audiences are electrified by the positive energy of this refreshing and honest concept. The ensemble repeatedly receives standing ovations for meaningfully balancing culture and show.

