



Discovery Theater has presented live educational performances at the Smithsonian to young people throughout the Washington, D.C., area and beyond since 1979. With programs that enrich the Smithsonian experience for nearly 50,000 children annually, Discovery Theater is a gateway to the exhibits, collections, and themes contained in the museums and galleries on the National Mall and in our community.

There's so much to do and explore at the Smithsonian— and Discovery Theater is the ideal place to begin!

OUR STAFF

Artistic Director.....Roberta Gasbarre
Administrative Coordinator & Group Sales.....Sara Lokossou
Production Manager.....Sam Game
Technicians.....Chris Lane, Celeste Harrison, & Louis Davis
House Manager.....Grace Sicard
Spring Interns.....Michelle Capobianco & Caleb Jasso

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The Nora Roberts Foundation
Siewchin Yong Sommer

All Ireland!

with Shannon Dunne & Alex Boatright



March 17, 2017

Ages 5 to 10

Kindergarten to 5th Grade



Smithsonian Associates

Discovery Theater • P.O. Box 23293 • Washington, DC 20026

www.DiscoveryTheater.org

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Shannon Dunne and Alex Boatright bring an interactive, visual and aural learning experience to Irish music and dance. Their show is engaging, featuring old style dancing, singing, and an array of instruments. Kids will learn about history, culture, music, dance, and community and have fun!

Shannon Dunne is an **acclaimed performer**, best known for her **percussive dancing**. Shannon has performed at theaters and festivals all over North America and Ireland. She has an extensive theater resume, which includes work as a company member of the award-winning **Synetic Theater**, as well as roles with **Theater Alliance**, **Scena Theater**, and **Young Playwrights Theater**. Shannon is the founder/director of **Camp Shenanigans**, a child-driven performing arts program for children on Capitol Hill, and **Shannon Dunne Dance**, a multigenerational sean-nós dance group dedicated to preserving the steps and values of the dance form.



Alex Boatright is a multiple All-Ireland medalist and is one of the premier **concertina and harp players** in the United States. She has performed as a soloist with the **Appalachian Symphony Orchestra** and as a member of a number of string quartets and orchestras in the D.C. metro area. Alex is committed to making traditional Irish music accessible to students of all levels as a sought after teacher on the East Coast.



RESOURCES

For more information, please visit:

www.shannondunne.com or www.alexboatright.com

Educators! Plan, Prepare, and Teach with the Smithsonian:

www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/index.html.

LEARN MORE

The **cláirseach** (or “Irish harp” in English) is one of the oldest musical instruments in the world and also **the national emblem of Ireland**. It is believed the harp was introduced to pre-Christian Europe by the Phoenicians who brought it over from **Egypt** as one of their international trading goods. The oldest surviving Celtic harps date back to the 15th century but the music of the harp has been an important emblem to Ireland since the 10th century.



Today the image of the harp as a national symbol of Ireland is almost as well recognized as the shamrock. It appears on the Presidential Seal and on many official documents, on passports, and on Irish euro coins.

Sean-nós (literally meaning “old style” in Irish) dance is an exciting, battering style step dance that is **improvised to live music**. Both musician and dancer learn rhythmic components (like rhythm *phrases*), and use those building blocks to create freely in the moment as they hear it in the tune. Sean-nós dancers work on developing an ear for the nuances in tunes, and drill rhythmic components. Dancers are encouraged to **develop their own style**, and are free to move their arms to aid in their performance

SMITHSONIAN CONNECTION

If you’re interested in listening to more Irish music and maybe even having your own Irish Ceili at your home, check out **Smithsonian Folkways**. Drawing from thousands of hours of music recorded and stored in the Department of Irish Folklore at University College Dublin, Professor Ríonach Uí Ógáin selected 21 performances representing the essence of traditional Irish music. Beginning with a 1941 recording of “An Jug Mór is é Lán,” a song in praise of drink, and continuing through **reels, jigs, airs, and laments**, this collection, annotated by Ógáin, features singers and musicians, many unknown outside their home county, in live performance of Irish song.



Smithsonian Folkways