

**Ireland's National Concert Hall and The American Ireland Fund
to honour Paddy Moloney and The Chieftains
with inaugural
NATIONAL CONCERT HALL 'LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT' AWARD**

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March 8th, 2012 | Philadelphia, USA
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(February 22nd, 2012) Ireland's National Concert Hall will present its first-ever **Lifetime Achievement Award** to Paddy Moloney and The Chieftains at a gala event in Philadelphia hosted by The American Ireland Fund.

On Thursday March 8th at 8.30pm at the Union League of Philadelphia CEO of the National Concert Hall **Mr. Simon Taylor** and President & CEO of The Worldwide Ireland Funds **Mr. Kieran McLoughlin** will present the **National Concert Hall Lifetime Achievement** award to Paddy Moloney and The Chieftains on the occasion of the group's 50th anniversary and in recognition of their tremendous contribution to the music industry worldwide and the promotion of the best of Irish culture.

Mr. Taylor said: *"For any group of musicians to stay together for 50 years is an amazing achievement - to perform at the level of The Chieftains for that time is unparalleled in Irish musical history. The National Concert Hall is privileged to be able to recognise and celebrate this success and also to mark the Hall's long association with The Chieftains. The National Concert Hall is the flagship of music in Ireland, bringing the world's greatest musicians to our stage and providing a platform for Ireland's finest artists. Peerless among these are Paddy Moloney and The Chieftains. I am enormously grateful to the American Ireland Fund for providing us with such a unique occasion to present our first Lifetime Achievement Award."*

Mr. McLoughlin said: *"The Fund is delighted to recognize half a century of musical brilliance by the Chieftains. Throughout, they have enhanced Ireland's reputation for excellence and creativity, a contribution which has never been more important. As part of our long standing support of the arts in Ireland, it is our pleasure to host this event and make the marvellous work of the National Concert Hall more widely known to Irish America."*

The **National Concert Hall Lifetime Achievement Award** will be the first of an annual award presented by the National Concert Hall to musicians who have contributed significantly to the musical life of Ireland.

Six time Grammy Award winners, The Chieftains are recognized for bringing traditional Irish music to the world's attention and to many they are the world's best known Irish band. The National Concert Hall Lifetime Achievement Award, presented this year in association with The American Ireland Fund, is a recognition and endorsement of what they have meant to Irish music and culture, both at home and to the far-reaching Irish diaspora. The Chieftains were the first traditional Irish band to perform at the National Concert Hall, two days after it opened at its current Earlsfort Terrace home on September 11th 1981.

The National Concert Hall has specially commissioned Irish sculptor John Behan to develop this unique award which will reflect Ireland and its strong cultural heritage. Taking inspiration from the Irish emblem of the harp the award will be cast in bronze and sit on a polished Irish marble base.

EVENT DETAILS

National Concert Hall of Ireland, in association with **The American Ireland Fund**

presents the inaugural

National Concert Hall Lifetime Achievement Award

to

Paddy Moloney & The Chieftains

Thursday March 8th, 2012

The Union League of Philadelphia

140 South Broad St., Philadelphia, PA (Parking available at 1415 Sansom Street [Midtown Garage])

7pm – Cocktails & Hors d'oeuvres

8.30pm – Presentation and award to The Chieftains

Business Attire

Tickets are \$125 and can be purchased by calling +1 212 689 3100

More Information

The Chieftains

Six time Grammy winners, The Chieftains are now recognized for bringing traditional Irish music to the world's attention. Formed in 1962 by Paddy Moloney The Chieftains have amassed a dizzyingly varied resume. They were the first Western group to perform on the Great Wall and the first group to give a concert in the Capitol Building in Washington, DC (at the invitation of former Speaker, Thomas "Tip" O' Neill. They have performed with many symphony and folk orchestras worldwide, and have broken many musical boundaries by collaborating and performing with some of the biggest names in rock, pop and traditional music in Ireland and around the world. On top of their six Grammy awards, they have been honoured in their own country by being officially named Ireland's Musical Ambassadors. In 2010, Paddy's whistle and Matt's flute travelled to outer space with a NASA astronaut, and this past year in 2011, they performed for HRH Queen Elizabeth II during her historical visit to Ireland. 2012 will mark the group's 50th anniversary, and they plan to celebrate the momentous occasion with a new album *Voice of Ages*, which finds the band collaborating with some of modern music's fastest rising artists (Bon Iver, The Decemberists and Paolo Nutin) to reinterpret traditional songs for old and new generations alike, proving what the music means today while hinting where it might lead tomorrow. www.thechieftains.com

The National Concert Hall is rated by performing artists as one of the finest concert halls in Europe. With weekly performances by its resident orchestra, The RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, as well as a range of performances covering classical, opera, traditional, jazz, musicals and popular music The National Concert Hall caters for all musical tastes. The National Concert Hall's vision is to excite and engage our audiences with a musical programme that will enhance immeasurably the cultural life of Ireland. www.nch.ie

The American Ireland Fund is a philanthropic network that supports worthy causes in Ireland promoting programs of peace and reconciliation, arts and culture, education and community development throughout the island of Ireland. Founded in 1976, The Worldwide Ireland Funds currently operate in 12 countries and have raised over \$380 million for more than 1,200 outstanding organizations. www.theirelandfunds.org

John Behan was born in Dublin in 1938, and now living and working near Galway city where he continues to vary his style of expression, John Behan is firmly established as a sculptor of international stature.

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For more information please contact

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