

# Mick Conneely & David Munnelly

"it's the wild music of the in-crowd" Dan Neely, Irish Echo

"old style music played in the old style, music that is both ageless and very much of now" Sean Laffey, Folkworld

Dave and Mick are master musicians no doubt about it, they have the credentials: the track record, the bands, albums and collaborations, but here you get more than just great musicianship, you get a dialogue, a conversation happening now, not parroted lines from some slickly rehearsed ensemble, that is the real excitement here. Cleary they have practice long and hard, there are gaps and stops and changes of rhythm, which the boys hit spot on, but you'd be forgiven if you thought they'd just walked

into the pub and played straight of the cuff."



## Biographies: Mick Conneely - David Munnelly

#### Mick Conneely - Fiddle / Bouzouki

Mick is one of the most respected fiddle players of his generation. He has played, toured & recorded with many artists, most notably De Danann. In 2001 his debut solo album 'Selkie' was released to critical acclaim on the prestigious boutique trad label Cló lar-Chonnacht and he has recorded on numerous albums to date. Along with fellow De Danann band member Alec Finn, Mick is a leading exponent of the 6-string Greek bouzouki in Irish traditional music. Mick teaches fiddle



and bouzouki classes at various festivals at home and abroad, for example: Willie Clancy Summer School in Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare, Ireland; MA course in Traditional Irish Music Performance at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick, Ireland; Catskills Irish Arts Week, NY, USA; Augusta Heritage Celtic Week, Davis & Elkins College, WV, USA. For more info visit mickconneely.com

#### David Munnelly - Accordion / Melodeon

David Munnelly was born into a musical family growing up listening to the singing and accordion playing of his Grandmother and the lilting of his grandfather. He was surrounded by music from very early on. At the age of 7 David picked up the accordion from listening to the playing of an uncle and from there continued to show great interest in traditional music. After going to



college in Dublin for a few years David was fortunate to be asked to join a band with Niamh Parsons whom he toured with for six years. After a few years playing and touring with such notaries as Gerry O Connor, Garry O Briain, De Danann and the Chieftains, in 1999 he set up the David Munnelly band with the recording of his debut CD titled Swing. He recorded three other band CDs and David and the band have toured extensively in North America, Europe and Japan and with some changes to the line up to the band they continue to tour and promote the unique sound of Irish music that they started with over 10 years ago.

## Reviews: Mick Conneely - David Munnelly

Echo Arts & Lifestyle TraditionalMusic By Daniel Neely

THE ALBUMS launched at this year's Willie Clancy Week continue to arrive in, with "'Tis What It Is," the new duet release from fiddler Mick Conneely and button accordionist David Munnelly, being the most recent. "'Tis What It Is" is a brilliant album, but not one for listeners looking for a quiet, introspective listening experience. Rather, it's the wild music of the in-crowd, possessing all the sound and fury of a full pub, where all your friends are having too good a time, each one knowing that by sunrise they'll be at a diner and it will be late morning until they reach their beds. Good stuff, indeed.

From County Mayo, Munnelly is a supremely talented box player. He was a member of Niamh Parsons's band the Loose Connections and has toured with groups including the Chieftains, De Danann, Gerry O'Connor, Arty McGlynn and Sharon Shannon. Conneely, on the other hand, was born in England and is currently living in Galway. He plays both bouzouki and fiddle and has played and toured with the likes of Mary Bergin, Mairtin O'Connor, Noel Hill & Tony Linnane, Tony MacMahon & Micho Russel, Matt Molloy, Kevin Crawford and Michael McGoldrick (among others), but he is currently the full time fiddle player with De Danann (Alec Finn's De Danann, that is; not Frankie Gavin's De Danann).

The album opens with a couple of high intensity barn dances, "The High Caul Cap / Napoleon Crossing the Alps." Conneely's bowing on this (and really, every) track is both dynamic and musical, and is matched not only by Munnelly's melodic virtuosity, but by his keen sense of harmony on the bass buttons.

The intensity remains high on tracks like "Maho Snaps/..." and P. Flanagan's/..." until we reach "For Michael," a haunting beautiful air Munnelly composed in memory of two friends. Here, better than anywhere else, Munnelly's harmonic sense is most easily appreciated. This track flows directly into the next, a rake of tinker-themed reels, "The Jolly Tinker/The Yellow Tinker/The Longford Tinker." It's a great transition and despite the reel set's intensity, there's a sense of real intimacy between the box and the fiddle on the first of the three tunes ("Jolly Tinker") that matches the air and also acts as a perfect bridge into the next tune ("Yellow Tinker"), where the bouzouki enters and adds a lightness that contrasts the set's earlier gravity.

One of the album's best tracks is the jig set "The Rakes of Kildare/Haley's Favorite/Flanagan's." Retrofuturistic in style and tone, it's 1920s Irish dance band

music gone berserk. Comprising Munnelly on melodeon, Conneely on fiddle, Fromseier on banjo and Molloy on piano, the track starts fast out of the gate with an energy that gathers strength and intensity as it moves along. Conneely and Munnelly's love for groups like the Flanagan Brothers (and Fromseier and Molloy's, for that matter) is completely apparent here, and the hard swing they give these jigs would fit into that era perfectly. By the track's last tune – a big four partner that moves through a few different key areas – everyone's absolutely on fire. When the group breaks the flow to signal that the end is nigh, it's a disappointment! (If you're a fan of the opening set of jigs from Enda Scahill and Paul Brock's album "Humdinger" – "Erin Go Bragh / Kimmel's / The Black Rogue" – you'll dig this one as well.

### Reviews: Mick Conneely - David Munnelly

The Irish Times - Friday, August 3, 2012 SIOBHÁN LONG

Tis What It Is Cló Iar-Chonnachta \*\*\*\*

Bottling the chutzpah of a session is an elusive goal that few musicians achieve in the recording studio. This aptly named CD is a welcome exception. David Munnelly orchestrates what could be called a full frontal assault on a heady mix of tunes, except that would hardly do justice to his salty accordion and melodeon style. He stretches and folds tunes such as The Pride of Rockchapel reel set with a Houdiniesque sleight of hand. Mick Conneely's fiddle is an able match: throaty and dynamic, it swoops and soars across Munnelly's accordion in vertiginous arcs.

The pace is checked by the inclusion of Munnelly's own slow air, For Michael: a thing of fragile beauty. Contributions on bouzouki, bodhrán and banjo are suitably animated, and Ryan Molloy's piano wrangles with a welcome muscularity without ever succumbing to the tired cliches that can dog this instrument. Around the house and never mind the dresser, cic.ie

## Stage Plot: Mick Conneely - David Munnelly

Ryan Molloy Mick Conneely David Munnelly Piano/Fiddle Fiddle/ Bouzouki Accordion 2 XLR (for 1 x SM58 1 x SM57 Keyboard)\* 1 x tall boom 1 x short boom 1 x SM57 1 x DI 1 x XIR 1 x tall boom AC power outlet 1 SM58 (mc) AC power outlet Chair (no arm rests) 1 x tall boom Chair (no arm rests) Chair (no arm rests) monitors monitors

- NB This is only when Ryan uses his own keyboard. Other times a keyboard /piano will be requested.
- Monitor Mix: Even balance across the 3 mixes to start with.

