



MEDIA RELEASE

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EDGEWATER CASINO CELTICFEST VANCOUVER 2009

March 11 – 15, 2009

Kinship! Come Together for a Celebration of Celtic Culture

Various venues in downtown Vancouver

Ticketed events \$5.00 - \$36.00 + service charges (60% of events are free of charge)

All tickets available online at www.celticfestvancouver.com or at **Tickets Tonight** by calling 604.684.2787 or in person at Tickets Tonight outlet located in the **Tourism Vancouver Visitor Centre**, Plaza Level (200 Burrard Street). Tickets for the Vogue Theatre event (**The BIG St. Pat's Night Out!** with Ashley Maclsaac and Lúnasa) are available through Ticketmaster at **604.280.4444**.

CelticFest Information: www.celticfestvancouver.com

Vancouver, BC. – Get ready to celebrate Celtic-style for five days and four nights in March with the return of the biggest and best-loved annual Celtic fête in western Canada. From **March 11 to 15, 2009**, **CelticFest Vancouver** will present the **6th Annual Edgewater Casino CelticFest Vancouver** featuring top international and Canadian Celtic recording artists. There are superb singers and instrumentalists, dazzling dancers and entertaining spoken word performers in the lineup, as well as some of Scotland's best "water of life". More than 60 events are scheduled at ten popular venues and two outdoor stages in downtown Vancouver. Tickets go on sale February 4, 2009. Headliners this year come from across Canada and Ireland and include **Ashley Maclsaac**, **Lúnasa** (Ireland), **the Duhks** and **Daniel Lapp**, and **The Paperboys** with **Puro Son** in a one-of-a-kind Celtic-Cuban Salsa concert. Also on board this year as official festival host is Irish American comedian **Maureen Langan**, one of the most fearlessly funny comics working today.

CelticFest organizers are excited to be staging their official annual opening event at a new festival venue, the Stadium Club at Edgewater Casino (the festival's title sponsor). Featured performers for **Opening Night (March 11)** are **the Duhks**, with special guest **Daniel Lapp**. The Duhks have been turning heads since they appeared on the Winnipeg scene five years ago. The band artfully fuses Celtic music with traditional bluegrass, folk rock, Afro-Cuban jazz and soul in a mix that's hard to pigeonhole and even harder to resist. The Duhks have earned a Grammy Award nomination for Best Country Vocal Performance, along with a Juno Award. After a recent club date in the Big Apple, a New York reviewer said this: "*The Duhks have soul in spades and a heart beat that pulses more true than an Ibiza night club. A night spent with The Duhks is summed up best by their own encore, "HALLELUJAH!"*" The Duhks will be joined by fiddler and musical adventurer Daniel Lapp, a fan favourite in the UK, Cape Breton and at home in BC.

Another not-to-be-missed event is the **BIG St. Pat's Night Out! (March 14)**. Festival fans will come together at The Vogue Theatre for a high-octane St. Pat's celebration concert featuring Canada's best-known fiddling innovator **Ashley Maclsaac** and the internationally acclaimed Irish Celtic ensemble **Lúnasa**.

Back by popular demand, Maclsaac continues to make waves in Canada and around the world with his adventurous blend of traditional Celtic musical forms - fast, furious and with phenomenal precision! No one can sit still when Maclsaac takes the stage and the energy level typically flies off the Richter scale.

Opening for Maclsaac is Ireland's **Lúnasa**, which *The New York Times* has described as "the hottest Irish acoustic group on the planet". Its lineup is drawn from some of Ireland's most successful ensembles of recent years and includes bassist **Trevor Hutchinson** (formerly of The Waterboys and The Sharon Shannon Band), flautist **Kevin Crawford** (Moving Cloud) and guitarist and banjo player **Paul Meehan** who has played with many of the best in Irish music including the Karan Casey Band, Liz Carroll, Tommy Peoples and Paddy Kennan.

A cross-cultural treat is in store when CelticFest launches a brilliant musical collaboration called "**CelticSalsa**" – **Celts and Cubans United! (March 13)** that brings two authentic and irresistible music traditions to the Stadium Club (Edgewater Casino). Juno-award winning recording artists **The Paperboys** have been crowd pleasers for years, with music that is rooted in Celtic traditions but also draws on an eclectic range of international influences. **Puro Son** is the brainchild of Vancouver-based Cuban trumpet player **Miguelito Valdes** (an alumnus of the Buena Vista Social Club), and includes five roots-minded Cuban musical colleagues. Expect the best of both these musical worlds, and a night made for dancing!

This year is the 250th anniversary of the birth of the great Celtic poet Robbie Burns, and actor and writer **John Hardie** will perform his play **King o' Men** to mark the occasion. Other Festival highlights include the annual **Whisky Kiss** Scotch tasting event at Morrissey Irish House, the lively **Battle of the Bards – A Literary Pub Crawl**, plus a traditional Celtic music session and free music workshops at Tom Lee Music, free live concerts at the weekend **Celtic Village** and at downtown pubs throughout the festival.

CelticFest Vancouver is proud to offer two-thirds of its events completely free of charge. Free lunchtime concerts will be presented March 11 to 13 on the Plaza at Granville Square as well as other evening performances at participating venues throughout Vancouver's Entertainment District, and on the Celtic Village's music stage over the weekend.

The **Celtic Village** will be staged on March 14 and 15, and due to construction activity on Granville Street it will relocate this year to the grounds of the Vancouver Art Gallery @ Georgia & Howe Streets. The annual Celtic Village will feature the Celtic Street Market and continuous free music performances, medieval sword demonstrations with Irish story-telling and more interactive entertainment for the kids.

The largest free event, the **6th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade (Sunday, March 15)** will follow a new route this year along Georgia Street from Broughton to Howe. The new route will provide more room for the estimated annual crowd of at least 350,000, as over 80 parade entries with 2,000 participants take to the streets including pipers, drummers, Celtic music groups, the Vancouver police drill team and fire brigades, stilt walkers, collector cars, Irish and Scottish dancers, multi-ethnic groups and much more. Pre-parade entertainment starts at 10 am and there will be free live entertainment presented after the parade and throughout the day/weekend at the Celtic Village at the Art Gallery Plaza. Parade entries are still welcome until January 30, and application forms are available online.

Festival tickets to featured events go on sale **February 4, 2009. For full information and ticket purchase for all concerts, please visit www.celticfestvancouver.com**. Tickets are also available through **Tickets Tonight** by calling **604.684.2787**, or in person at Tickets Tonight outlet, located in the **Tourism Vancouver Visitor Centre**, Plaza Level (200 Burrard Street). Tickets for the Vogue Theatre event (**The BIG St. Pat's Night Out!** with Ashley Maclsaac and Lúnasa) are available through Ticketmaster at **604.280.4444**.

Festival Program Guides will be available at most 7-Eleven outlets throughout the Lower Mainland and at participating venues after February 7.