

# WorldFest Performers 2014

## Knight Auditorium



**Port Mor** has performed traditional Irish dance music in an authentic style in the Champaign-Urbana area since 1996. The core members throughout this time have been Jake Schumacher (button accordion and piano), Mary Leandra Baker (fiddle), and Dave Glenn, (concertina). The current line-up also includes Dean Karres (percussion, whistle, pipes and vocals), Ethan James (wooden flute), Jessica Kelliher (wooden flute), and Tracey Mitchell (tenor banjo). For their performance at the Spurlock Museum, they will be joined by dancer and dance instructor Daniel Flora. The first hour will highlight the wide range of the

various instruments and dance music tempos to be found in the Irish tradition, along with a few songs and some solo step-dancing. During the second hour the group will provide live music for Irish social dances taught on the spot by Daniel Flora to interested audience participants.

Performance times: 1:00-1:45 and 2:15-3:15 PM

### Individual Port Mor performers:

#### Leandra Baker, fiddle

Leandra learned much of her music from Fred Rice RIP, a generous, helpful Irish man from Co. Offaly who was as mad for the fiddle as she is. Leandra was a member of Mind the Gap and currently plays with The Rushes, The Greengages, Port Mor, the Spudhunters, and at various sessions in Chicago and Champaign.

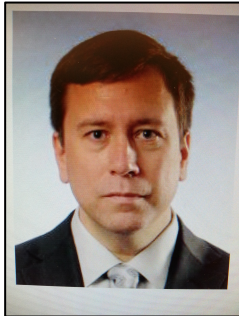
#### Jake Schumacher, B/C button accordion, piano

Jake created and hosted one of the first Celtic music radio shows in the US. He's been a founding member of The Hooley Band, Swoop, Port Mor, the Y2Kaylee Band and the Spudhunters, and leads a weekly session at O'Neil's in Champaign. He learned much about Irish traditional music, and life, from his dear friend Mike Hoban RIP, a Mayo born horseman, master bricklayer, box-player and composer.



David Glenn, concertina

David has been passionate about playing Irish Traditional music on the Anglo Concertina for over 20 years. He has been fortunate to take instruction and inspiration from great carriers of the tradition, including John Williams, Noel Hill, Jacqueline McCarthy and locally from friend and bandmate Jake Schumacher. David has worked locally as a software engineer for the past 33 years and lives with his family in rural Fisher.



Ethan James, flute

Ethan, a University of Illinois graduate, currently lives on the East Coast. He has played Irish music in Ireland, El Salvador, Brazil, Cambodia, Vietnam, China, and Korea. Ethan has found that the language of Irish music is universal: there is Guinness in Cambodia.

Jessica Kelliher, flute

Jessica is currently a graduate student in the Department of Microbiology at the University of Illinois. She started Irish Dancing in kindergarten and continued through college, where she also began playing Irish flute and tin whistle. While living in Milwaukee, WI, she played with the local Irish band Blackthorn Folly. Jessica now enjoys keeping up with her Irish heritage by playing at the weekly Dublin O'Neil's session whenever she can get out of the lab!



Tracey Mitchell, banjo

Tracey has been playing Irish traditional music for about 4 years, and his influences range from banjo player Angelina Carberry to clarinetist Andy Statman. When not playing music he can often be found deep in the woods with his camera and a snake hook. He and his wife Cynthia have lived in the C-U area since 1992.

Dean Karres, whistle, percussion,  
Uilleann pipes, vocals

Dean won the title of Midwest Senior Bodhràn Champion in 2005. He has led bodhràn clinics in Kansas, Missouri, Texas, Mississippi and Illinois. Dean was a member of the band Triskelion. Besides playing with The Rushes, Port Mor, the Spudhunters and at sessions, Dean promotes traditional Celtic music concerts in C-U through "The Piper's Hut Concert Series".



Appearing with Port Mor for this special performance:  
Daniel Flora, dancer, dance instructor

## Ancient Mediterranean Gallery

### Goran Ivanovic

Credibly multicultural and countercultural, Goran Ivanovic—from the groups Eastern Blok and AKGI Guitar Duo—creates a unique musical language that melts together his Balkan roots and Flamenco and Latin guitar traditions.

"Serbian-American classical nylon-string guitarist Ivanovic plays unabashedly beautiful music that is as captivatingly melodic and cinematic as it is technically and compositionally sophisticated." *Guitar Player Magazine*



The AKGI Guitar Duo's *Blackmail* won a Best Album of 2013 Award from *Acoustic Guitar Magazine*.

Performance times: 12:45-1:30 and 1:45-2:30 PM.

### Ben Wheeler



Ben performs traditional instrumental music from the Caucasus, specifically Azerbaijan and Georgia. His WorldFest performance will feature two instruments: The *chonguri* and the *saz*. Chonguri is native to West Georgia, specifically the regions of Guria, Samegrelo, and Ajara. It has a unique construction, featuring a shortened drone string set in the middle of the neck. It is most often used for accompaniment to vocal music, but during his time as a student at the Tbilisi State Conservatory he investigated the lesser-known instrumental pieces in the instrument's repertoire.

The saz (in the case of his instrument, the Azeri saz) has been traditionally used by traveling bards or "*Ashiqs*" throughout the Caucasus. He will be playing a selection of Azeri Ashiq music from the region of Borchali, located near the Azeri border in Southeast Georgia. Ben will be sharing part of his set with WorldFest's Artistic Director, Jason Finkelman.

Performance time: 3:15-4:00 PM.

## Ancient Egyptian Exhibit

### Sankhya Hirani

Sankhya, a freshman at Urbana's University High School, performs Odissi, a classical dance of India. Her WorldFest sets will combine a demonstration of the varied gestures, movements, and postures of this dance with the performance and explanation of short dance sequences. Sankhya is a student of Mrs. Gullapudi Raman Kumari and has performed annually for the ASHA organization's charitable fundraisers on campus and for various Indian festivals in Champaign-Urbana, Peoria, and Chicago.

Performance times: 12:30-12:55 and 2:00-2:25 PM.



### Anne Shimojima



Described as a graceful, spirited, and mesmerizing storyteller, Anne Shimojima tells literary stories, historical pieces, and folk tales from her Asian heritage and around the world. A retired, award-winning school library media specialist, Anne has performed for 30+ years before audiences of all ages across the country at schools, libraries, festivals, museums, and conferences. She gives workshops on the use of storytelling in education and the creation of family history projects. Her World War II family incarceration camp story *Hidden Memory* can be found at [www.racebridgesforschools.com/anne](http://www.racebridgesforschools.com/anne) with a lesson plan and discussion questions.

Performance times: 1:30-1:55, 2:30-2:55, and 3:30-3:55 PM.