



**IRISH ALL-STAR ACOUSTIC BAND LÚNASA LAUNCHES
MONTH-LONG U.S. CONCERT TOUR ON FEBRUARY 22**

**Highly-Anticipated Collaboration with Ireland's RTE Concert Orchestra,
the Band's First Recording in Three Years, Set for April 16th Release**

Poised to open an exciting new chapter in an already stellar career, Ireland's Lúnasa is set for a month-long tour of the U.S., kicking off February 22nd in advance of the release of the band's first new recording in three years. The much-anticipated new album, **LÚNASA WITH THE RTÉ CONCERT ORCHESTRA**, a musical collaboration that marks a true first for the all-star Irish traditional band and the world-renowned national orchestra of Ireland, is scheduled for release on April 16th on Lúnasa Records via City Hall Distributors (in the U.S.). It will be preceded by a digital release in time to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in March.



The upcoming tour kicks off at the Towne Crier in Pawling, New York and wends its way around the east coast and into the Midwest. Among the highlights are appearances at the Rubenstein Atrium of New York's famed Lincoln Center on March 7 and on the nationally-syndicated *Mountain Stage with Larry Groce* (www.mountainstage.org) radio broadcast, which will take place on Sunday, March 10 from the Paramount Theatre for the Arts in Bristol, Tennessee. Also on the bill for that show will be western swing band Asleep at the Wheel, Larry Keel & and the Natural Bridge and The Down Hill Strugglers. *Mountain Stage*, known for featuring both established and emerging American and international artists, is the longest running show of its kind on public radio. The show will be recorded for broadcast later in the year on some 100 NPR stations across the U.S. and overseas via the Voice of America satellite service. Also, their appearance at the Sellersville Theatre outside of Philadelphia will be filmed for the *On Canvas* television program on PBS' WHYY-TV for broadcast this spring.

Since coming together in 1996, Lúnasa has performed over 1500 concerts and achieved a worldwide reputation as a different kind of Irish traditional music band. The all-instrumental quintet is noted for double bass and guitar-driven rhythms, original compositions mixed with material from Celtic regions such as Brittany, Galicia and Asturias and a surprising focus on slower melodies involving three-part harmonies played on the traditional pipes, fiddle and flute.

Expect **LÚNASA WITH THE RTÉ CONCERT ORCHESTRA**, the band's ninth album release, to reconfigure more than a few musical maps via the intersection between Irish music orchestral and Irish music traditional. The album began when RTÉ approached Niall Vallely, one of Ireland's most talented emerging composers and arrangers and brother of Lúnasa's Cillian Vallely, with the idea of creating arrangements and working with a traditional band. Niall suggested Lúnasa for the project, and the result is a magical union of Ireland's top traditional band and Ireland's national orchestra to create a very new sound in Irish music. Their first joint effort was a sold-out performance at Dublin's National Concert Hall on June 19, 2012 that was later broadcast on RTÉ Radio 1 and followed by the recording of the album. The RTÉ Concert Orchestra, whose credits include projects with talents as diverse as Luciano Pavarotti and Cleo Laine and Ireland's Sharon Shannon, Sinéad O'Connor, Imelda May and The Coronas, is conducted by David Brophy.

"From 'Buachaillín Bán,' 'Scully's' and 'The Dusty Miller' to the medley of 'The Minor Bee' set onto old favorites like 'Morning Nightcap' and 'The Last Pint,' what an amazing buzz it's been playing our music among the orchestral wall of sound," explains Lúnasa flautist Kevin Crawford. "A number of the pieces had been banished to the wilderness, destined never to see the light of a Lúnasa day ever again. Getting the opportunity to dust them down and hear them in a totally new environment gave the tunes a whole new lease of life and reawakened our love and respect for them. It's an experience that I certainly never thought I'd encounter as a traditional Irish musician." The Enhanced CD release will also feature a 4:46 film of Lúnasa performing "Morning Nightcap" with the orchestra at the June, 2012 concert.

Lúnasa, comprised of Crawford, Seán Smyth (fiddle and low whistles), Trevor Hutchinson (double bass), Cillian Vallely (uilleann pipes and low whistles) and newest member Ed Boyd (guitar), loves American audiences, and American audiences love Lúnasa. Since their first U.S. tour 16 years ago, the band has criss-crossed the country, playing intimate clubs, concert halls and prestigious venues like the Hollywood Bowl. "The audiences in America bring a great energy and goodwill to the table," explains Smyth. "Often, I think it's because the Irish have a history of good standing and respect in America, and Lúnasa are benefitting in a way from this famous historical connection."



Whatever the reason, it's a tradition that will continue into 2013 with the new tour and the release of this groundbreaking new CD.

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Lúnasa's upcoming U.S. concert dates are as follows:

February 22-Towne Crier, Pawling, NY; 23-Fitchburg State College, Fitchburg, MA; 24-Blackstone River Theatre, Cumberland, RI; 27-Sellersville Theater, Sellersville, PA; 28-Performing Arts Center, Tarpon Springs, FL.

March 1-University of Florida Performing Arts Center, Gainesville, FL; 3-Adelphi University, Garden City, NY; 6-Reston Community Center, Reston, VA; 7-Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center, New York City; 8-Carlisle Theatre, Carlisle, PA; 9-Carnegie Lecture Hall, Pittsburgh, PA; 10-*Mountain Stage with Larry Groce* radio broadcast, Paramount Theatre for the Arts, Bristol, TN; 12-Fenian's Irish Pub, Conklin, MI; 13-P.J. McIntyre's Irish Pub, Cleveland, OH; 14-Palace Theatre, Syracuse; 16-Center for the Arts, Jackson, WY; 17-Powell High School Auditorium, Powell, WY; 20-Evanston Celtic Festival, Evanston, WY; 22-Myrna Loy Center, Helena, MT; 23-Hamilton Performing Arts Center, Hamilton, MT; and 24-Mother Lode Theatre, Butte, MT.

LÚNASA WITH THE RTÉ CONCERT ORCHESTRA -- available April 16th

Track List:

1. Casu
2. Leckan Mór
3. Spoil the Dance
4. An Buachallín Bán
5. Morning Nightcap
6. Breton Set (with Tro Breízh)
7. The Minor Bee
8. The Last Pint
9. The Merry Sisters of Fate (with Dr. Gilbert's)

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