

Kieran Goss & Friends

Special Guests: Tom Paxton, Eddi Reader,
Brendan Murphy and Maura O'Connell.

Grand Opera House, Belfast
Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd April 2011

Following the huge success of his sold out run of shows at The Grand Opera House, Belfast, in March 2008, Kieran Goss is returning to the Opera House for two nights: Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd April, 2011.

While songwriting has made Kieran Goss a star (*Brand New Star, Reasons to Leave, Out of my Head*), it's live on stage where he truly shines. The Irish Times wrote of his last shows at the Opera House:

The sense of fun is tremendous, the playing first rate and the songs sheer quality. The encores were genuine, but only because the man is too.

In the words of Rodney Crowell, a longtime friend and collaborator, and one of the guests of the March 2008 Opera House shows:

I've toured with Kieran and watched him perform many times. I've seen him win the hearts of everyone in the room, not just with his great songs and instinctive musicality, but with his warmth and humour. It's the performance of an artist at the top of his game, delivered with intelligence and integrity... Kieran Goss is one of Ireland's national treasures.

Joining Kieran for these two very special shows will be the legendary American songwriter, **TOM PAXTON** (*The Last Thing on my Mind, Ramblin' Boy, Bottle of Wine*). Nanci Griffith is famously quoted as saying: *I think we are all born singing Tom Paxton songs*, and his music has certainly been a huge inspiration to Kieran:

I've been a fan of Tom Paxton for as long as I can remember. I got my first guitar at the age of nine and the very first song I learned to play was The Last Thing On My Mind! When I made my first TV appearance on As I Roved Out on BBC Northern Ireland in 1982, I sang that song, and I've sung it on stages all over the world since then. Tom Paxton's generosity to his audience and fellow musicians is renowned. His passion for justice and the ties that bind people together is unwavering. For all this and more, he is rightly one of the most revered musicians of his generation. I'm delighted and honoured to have this opportunity to share a stage with Tom Paxton.

EDDI READER is widely acknowledged as one of Scotland's finest singers. She famously harmonized with Annie Lennox, touring with the Eurythmics, but it was her singing with Fairground Attraction that really brought her into the limelight. The single, *Perfect*, and album, *The First of a Million Kisses*, both topped the British charts, but it was her subsequent solo albums that signalled her increasing ability to assimilate different musical styles and make them all very much her own. From the traditional to the contemporary, Eddi Reader can sing it all and like many others, Kieran has been a fan for many years:

There is no questioning that Eddi is a great singer but while many people are impressed by the perfection of her technique, for me what really sets her apart is the depth and quality of the emotional performance; her ability not only to move the listener but to make a connection with

the audience. It's not just technique. It's passion and instinct and the sheer love of singing. I'm really looking forward to performing with her.

MAURA O'CONNELL used to jokingly say that she was 'just a singer' but that ironic tag could equally well read as 'spectacular singer', 'captivating stylist', 'introspective chanteuse', 'musical explorer', 'songwriter's singer' and 'incredible live performer'.

Whatever label one attaches to Maura O'Connell, there are precious few singers with the natural ability to delve so deeply into a vast array of musical material. From her first recorded appearance as a lead vocalist with the celebrated traditional Irish group De Dannan in 1981, to her eleventh and latest solo album, *Naked with Friends*, Maura O'Connell has married an unmistakable deep, rich, flexible voice and her signature talent for finding what's most potent in the work of a broad array of genre-jumping songwriters, to pull the listener right along with her—to the heart of a song. Along the way she has earned two Grammy Award nominations, multi-platinum sales success and become a huge star in the USA where she has been resident for the last 20 years. Kieran explains how he and Maura met:

I've been following Maura's career for many years and like all her friends, was delighted when she found success in the States. Unfortunately the downside of that for us here in Ireland is that we rarely get to see her perform live. We had toured together in Ireland in the early nineties as part of the 'Woman's Heart' tour and in recent years, during extended stays in Nashville, we reconnected and renewed our friendship. I kept saying to her 'you have to come back and play more shows in Ireland' and I'm delighted that she's coming home to appear at these shows in Belfast with me and I know that her many fans in Ireland will feel the same. She's an incredible artist and performer.

BRENDAN MURPHY needs no introduction to music fans in Ireland. He is the singer and principal songwriter in the band The Four of Us who have enjoyed both huge critical and commercial success in Ireland and internationally. Brendan's recently released debut solo album *Walk With Me* has received rave reviews and its stripped back acoustic production reveals a songwriter of rare quality and depth. Kieran has been a friend and a fan of Brendan's for many years:

Over the years Brendan and I have written many songs together including Clear Day, Why Should I be Lonely and Into Your Arms, and I've been saying for years that he is quite simply the best songwriter I've ever met. But for me, his new solo album moves him into another league both as a writer and a singer. Songs like Walk With Me and Home Again are set to become standards. We performed together a couple of years ago at the Opera House and the audience just loved him. Likewise when we toured together in Germany and Switzerland earlier this year. I'm delighted that he's able to do these shows with me at the Opera House.

Please note: All the guest artists listed will be appearing on both nights.

**To book, telephone the Opera House box office on +44 2890 241919
or book online at the Opera House website; www.goh.co.uk**

For more information, see www.kierangoss.com