



## **BCMFest 2010 to Explore "Core Traditions"**

### ***Seventh annual festival set for January 8 and 9***

Hot Celtic music is the perfect answer for the cold of winter, and that's where the Boston Celtic Music Fest (BCMFest) comes in.

The seventh annual BCMFest takes place January 8 and 9, 2010, featuring some of Boston's best performers in the Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton and other Celtic or Celtic-influenced music traditions.

BCMFest #7 kicks off January 8 with an evening concert at Club Passim in Harvard Square as well as its wildly popular, hipster-friendly Celtic dance party, the Boston Urban Ceilidh, at Springstep in Medford. The festival continues on January 9 with performances at four stages, located in Club Passim and at nearby First Church of Cambridge. First Church will be the setting that night at 8 p.m. for the BCMFest Finale Concert, which will include performances by the Makem and Spain Brothers, Kimberley Fraser, and Barbara McOwen with Anne Hooper.

What's a word to describe BCMFest? Think "grassroots." The festival board and most of its staff are volunteers. The festival line-up is selected almost exclusively via

application, and all performers — whether full-time touring professionals, evenings-and-weekends musicians or newcomers to the scene — receive the same expense reimbursement stipend. BCMFest also is a place where generations gather: Teen-age fiddlers sharing a tune with octogenarian accordion players, or grad students hoofing it with middle-aged parents on the dance floor.

At a time when the financial crisis has forced a number of local or regional music events and organizations to scale back or suspend operations this year, BCMFest — buoyed by its largest-ever total of performer applications and a growing audience — is poised for another successful January.

Performers confirmed for the 2010 festival include Flynn Cohen & John McGann, The Gobshites, Tri, Colm O'Brien, Kate Chadbourne, Calum Pasqua & Susie Petrov, Michael O'Leary, Gordon Aucoin & Lloyd Carr, Catherine Joyce & Tess Ruderman, David O'Docherty, Cedar Stanistreet & Max Newman, Bento Boxy, Tina Lech & Ted Davis, and the trio of Laurel Martin, Kieran Jordan and David Surette, as well as a family-oriented production, "The Fiddler's Wish," and a special one-of-its-kind ensemble that will recreate the classic Dudley Street Boston Irish Dance Hall Era from the 1930s to 1950s. Performer information, updates and other details are available at [bcmfest.com](http://bcmfest.com).

BCMFest 2010 has a "back to basics" theme, say festival organizers, exploring the core traditions in which BCMFest was forged.

"Last year, BCMFest put the spotlight on what might be called the 'fringe' of Celtic music," explains BCMFest co-founder and board member Laura Cortese. "The festival featured a number of acts that were connected to, but a little removed from, the Celtic traditions: old-timey and Appalachian, or New England contra dance music, for example.

We even had a performance by Session Americana, who play a blend of country rock, blues and roots music, but for BCMFest put together a set that had an Irish theme.

"For BCMFest 2010, we felt it was important to reaffirm the importance of core traditions, and highlight people who keep those traditions alive and well in the Boston area. So, many of the acts who submitted applications this year and who were selected for BCMFest reflect this emphasis."

Shannon Heaton, who co-founded BCMFest with Cortese and also sits on the festival board, adds: "During its first six years, BCMFest has reached out to the area's diverse Celtic music community, through the festival as well as events during the year, such as the monthly Celtic Music Monday series at Club Passim and our annual music cruise in Gloucester. And every year we've seen more and more musicians, singers and dancers come up with some great ideas and collaborations that really speak to the BCMFest mission.

"What's especially encouraging about this year," Heaton says, "is that when we issued the call for performers to apply we made a point of stating the 'core traditions' theme, and it clearly generated a response. There were applications from first-time performers, as well as from people who have appeared before, who came up with an act or collaboration geared to the theme."