

*University of Guelph  
College of Arts and School of Fine Art and Music Present*

# **Tony McManus**

**Virtuosity from the Soul**



**THURSDAY  
AT NOON**

*Free  
Concert Series*

*Thursday, February 8*

*12:00 pm*

*Mackinnon Room 107  
(Goldschmidt Room)*



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## ***Program***

Tony McManus will take you on a musical journey through the Celtic parts of Europe and the diaspora.....with side trips into jazz and classical.

Special guest, Julia Toaspern, will join Tony McManus for a few pieces.

## ***Biography***

To find a unique voice on so ubiquitous an instrument as the acoustic guitar is quite an achievement: to do so within a centuries old idiom where the instrument has no real history is truly remarkable.

**Tony McManus** has come to be recognized throughout the world as the leading guitarist in Celtic Music. From early childhood his twin obsessions of traditional music and acoustic guitar have worked together to produce a startlingly original approach to this ancient art. In Tony's hands the complex ornamentation normally associated with fiddles and pipes are accurately transferred to guitar in a way that preserves the integrity and emotional impact of the music.

Self-taught from childhood, initially through listening to the family record collection, McManus abandoned academia in his twenties to pursue music full time. The session scene in Glasgow and Edinburgh provided the springboard for gigs around Scotland and a studio set for BBC Radio, frequently rebroadcast, began to spread the word.

Tony's first self-titled recording in 1996, followed by Pourquoi Quebec in 1999 led to worldwide recognition. However, it was with the release of Ceol More in 2002 that Tony's stature as a first-class musician reached a new level. Critics hailed the focused, spell-binding nature of the music, from the plaintive Jewish hymn "Shalom Aleichem" to the ingenious arrangement of the Charles Mingus classic "Goodbye Pork Pie Hat". Having been nominated as Musician of the Year by both the BBC Folk Awards and The Scottish Traditional Music awards, in 2002 "Ceol More" hit the Critic's Album of the year list in Acoustic Guitar magazine and named "Live Ireland Awards" Album of the Year.

Tony's work has come to represent Celtic music in the guitar world, making regular appearances at guitar specific events where just a few years ago jigs and reels would be unheard of. He is invited annually to the Chet Atkins Festival in Nashville, has appeared at Guitar Festivals in Soave and Pescantina, Sarzana and Francacorta Italy; Frankston, Australia; Issoudun and Bordeaux France; Kirkmichael, Scotland; Bath and Kent, England; Bochum and Osnabruck, Germany. In 2004 he appeared at the famous Ryman Auditorium in Nashville in the "All Star Guitar Night" featuring Steve Morse, Bryan Sutton, Muriel Anderson, Béla Fleck and Victor Wooten and headlined by the legendary Les Paul.

His ability to reach audiences unfamiliar with traditional music is remarkable- he is quite comfortable at predominantly classical events such as the Dundee and Derry Guitar Festivals (appearing six times between the two) the Uppsala Guitar Festival and even The Bogotá International Guitar Festival where he followed virtuoso Eduardo Fernandez.

Today his live work ranges from intimate solo performance through his trio with brothers Gary and Greg Grainger to the quartet Men of Steel (with fellow guitarists Dan Crary, Beppe Gambetta and Don Ross). He is an enthusiastic collaborator both as a leader and as a sideman having worked with, among many others Dougie McLean, Phil Cunningham, Mairi MacInnes, Liam O'Flynn, Martin Simpson, Kevin Burke, Alison Brown, Martyn Bennett, Natalie MacMaster, Patrick and Jacky Molard, Mairead ní Mhoanaigh and Dermot Byrne, The Nashville Chamber Orchestra, John Jorgenson, Jean Michel Veillon, Catriona Macdonald, Seikou Keita, Xosé Manuel Budiño, Ewen Vernal and Andy Irvine.

He is also in great demand as a studio musician having contributed to over 60 albums. In addition to his solo output Tony has worked with both singers and instrumentalists providing his distinctive sound on many successful projects.

His 2009 release "The Makers's Mark" saw him showcase 15 of the finest luthier-built guitars available. Recording a solo piece on each instrument, the project caught the attention of the mainstream rock guitar press in a way that acoustic work rarely does.

The following year, a chance hearing on Irish radio led to an invite to contribute music to the soundtrack of Oscar winning director Neil Jordan's film "Ondine" starring Colin Farrell.

Never one to be typecast, Tony's new album "Mysterious Boundaries" is his most ambitious to date. An encouraging challenge from mandolin virtuoso Mike Marshall to learn the Bach E Major Prelude on guitar led to an exploration of classical and baroque music – seemingly very different to the jigs and reels that he grew up with. By examining the boundaries between genres and sticking to his steel string guitar (rather than the conventional classical guitar) McManus has produced a work of great originality and beauty, hailed by his peers as "a masterpiece" (Renbourn), "beyond beautiful... it's PERFECT!" (Tommy Emmanuel) and which contains a truly remarkable rendition of Bach's colossal Chaconne in D Minor – one of the greatest compositions of any age.

Whatever work McManus brings within his scope the listener is assured a journey into the depths of the music in the company of a great talent.

# THURSDAY AT NOON

## Concert Series

**Winter Semester 2018 - Celebrating 50 Years of Music Making**

Concerts start at 12:00 p.m. Thursdays in MacKinnon Room 107 (Goldschmidt Room)

Everyone welcome and admission is FREE – donations gratefully appreciated.

- January 18** ..... **Faculty Showcase.** The talented School of Fine Art and Music Faculty perform.
- January 25** ..... **Romanza: Music of Spain and Latin America with the Azuline Duo.** Featuring Sara Traficante, flute, and Emma Rush, guitar.
- February 1** ..... **Duo Percussion – More Than Drums!** Brennan Connolly and Dave Robilliard perform an eclectic and high-energy program featuring classical, contemporary and Canadian music. Nominated for “Best Percussion Ensemble” in 2014 by Drum! Magazine.
- February 8** ..... **Virtuosity from the Soul.** Widely considered the top Celtic guitarist in the world, Tony McManus will perform from his extensive repertoire, leading the listener on a deep musical journey.
- February 15** ..... **Duo Forte in Recital.** Canadian pianists Christina Petrowska Quilico and Shoshana Telner perform captivating four hand music by twentieth century composers. This dance inspired program includes Samuel Barber’s Souvenirs Opus 28, and transcriptions of George Gershwin’s Cuban Overture and Maurice Ravel’s La Valse.
- February 22** ..... **NO CONCERT – Reading Week**
- March 1** ..... **Tio Chorinho** is the only ensemble in Canada dedicated to performing *choro* music, the “New Orleans jazz of Brazil.” Exciting, intimate, nostalgic and virtuosic, *choro* is an infectious urban-folk style whose universal appeal belies its musical complexity.
- March 8** ..... **Flung Loose Into The Stars.** Pianist/composer Adam Sherkin offers a view onto the distinctive canon of Canadian piano works inspired by the Cosmos. From the ancient astronomical traditions of our own ancestors here on Earth to super-giant main sequence stars in the solar systems and beyond, this music attests to the significance of the night sky as a characteristically *Canadian* impulse for creativity. Professor James Harley’s own contribution, *flung loose into the stars*, is featured on the programme. This concert is part of the annual Creative Music Symposium.
- March 15** ..... **Angela Park, piano and Scott St. John, violin,** perform Schubert Fantasy in C major and Brahms Sonata No. 1 in G major.
- March 22** ..... **Student Soloists Day,** featuring performances by the talented SOFAM Applied Music students.
- March 29** ..... **Student Soloists Day,** featuring performances by the talented SOFAM Applied Music students.

For more information on the winter 2018 series, contact Vicki Isotamm ([visotamm@uoguelph.ca](mailto:visotamm@uoguelph.ca)) (519) 824-4120 ext.52991



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