

TRINITY



TRINITY IRISH DANCE COMPANY

FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Mark Howard

ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Chelsea Hoy

ARTISTIC ASSOCIATES Ali Doughty

THE COMPANY

Ali Doughty, Michael Fleck, Lydia Fredrick, Anna Gorman, Abigail Graham-Luke, Chelsea Hoy, Francisco Lemus, Danielle Masbruch, Sierra McNall, Kaela Milewski, Claudia Morrison, Sydney Niewiedzial, Colleen O'Connor, Kelsey Parry, Gracie Peters, Clare Rahner, Kaitlyn Sardin

MUSICIANS

Jake James, Christopher Kulwin, Brendan O'Shea, and Steven Rutledge

PRODUCTION MANAGER Garvin Jellison

STAGE MANAGER/LIGHTING DIRECTOR J. Arthur Franjoine

FRIDAY, **FEBRUARY 18** @ 8 PM

SATURDAY, **FEBRUARY 19** @ 2 PM

SATURDAY, **FEBRUARY 19** @ 8 PM

Annenberg Center, Zellerbach Theatre

There will be no intermission.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Trinity Irish Dance Company (TIDC) has significantly changed the direction and scope of Irish dance, re-introducing the art form as the phenomenon it is today. TIDC is constantly in search of an original means of expression while maintaining a high regard for tradition. This innovative, nonprofit company was created to celebrate the pioneering work of Founding Artistic Director Mark Howard. Howard's uniquely Irish-American company was the birthplace of progressive Irish dance, an innovative movement genre which opened new avenues of artistic freedom that led directly to commercial productions such as *Riverdance*.

By using Irish dance as an instrument and a metaphor, TIDC redefines the medium with passion, flair and precision. Through the years, TIDC has collaborated with many noted contemporary choreographers, which has led to an increased vocabulary of movement and the development of a new genre of dance. With a unique blend of uncompromising power and grace, TIDC sends a consistent message of female empowerment with a repertory that has elevated the art form for nearly three decades.

Considered an American treasure by critics and enthusiasts worldwide, TIDC has performed sold-out tours in Europe, Asia and North America, appearing in distinguished venues such as New York's Joyce Theater, Washington, D.C.'s Kennedy Center, UCLA's Royce Hall, Princeton's McCarter Theater, Ottawa's National Arts Center of Canada, Tokyo's Orchard Hall and Chicago's Auditorium Theatre, among many others. The company has travelled to entertain dignitaries as varied as Monaco's royal family, Irish and American presidents, Japanese royalty and Indian meditation masters.

TIDC holds an important place in the dance world, offering both a highly skilled presentation of traditional Irish step dance and a brilliantly engaging interpretation of contemporary world vision.

TIDC is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

Mark Howard (Founding Artistic Director/Choreographer)

For more than three decades, this Emmy® Award-winning choreographer has been striving for and achieving that which is profoundly significant and equally difficult to attain—the transcendence of craft to art and the synthesis of forms to create something that is forward-looking and new. His work maintains integrity while simultaneously going beyond the framework of ethnicity to carve new traditions.

Born in Yorkshire, England, and raised in Chicago, Howard began his dancing career at eight years old at the Dennehy School of Irish Dance. He began teaching when he was only 17 years old, and by 19, he had launched the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance, subsequently leading them to unprecedented world championship team titles for the United States—the first when he was only 25.

Howard's pioneering work in the late 80s led to his unique transition from the competitive stage to the performing arts stage and began his gradual evolution from coach to artistic director. By 1990, these formative years led to the creation of a nonprofit forum, Trinity Irish Dance Company (TIDC), to celebrate and further his work. From its inception, TIDC has been met with great critical acclaim at renowned venues across the world.

Howard has been named three times as one of *Irish American Magazine's* "Top 100 Irish-Americans," and was honored in 2011 by iBAM! and in 2015 by Chicago's Lawyers For the Creative Arts for his outstanding contribution to the performing arts. His work has led to numerous Choreographer's Fellowships awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts. From PBS and ABC specials to extensive film work for Disney, Touchstone, Universal and DreamWorks, Howard has worked with the likes of Oprah Winfrey, Ron Howard and Sam Mendez. He was the personal dance coach for actors Tom Hanks and Daniel Craig while working

on the film *Road to Perdition*. Howard himself was a regular guest on *The Tonight Show* starring Johnny Carson from 1989 until 1991, and has accumulated a multitude of national and international television credits including *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *CBS This Morning*, *The Today Show*, *Live with Regis*, *Good Morning America*, *MARTHA*, *Conan* and *1st Look*, to name a few.

Howard continues to choreograph new works, as well as expand his independent career to work in theatre, television, concert and film. The feature film screenplay *SOLES*, which focuses on Howard and Trinity, is currently in the works.

Chelsea Hoy (Associate Artistic Director/Choreographer)

At 26, Denver-born Hoy has already become a major player in the performing arts world. Generous, rebellious, creative and complex, her choreographic influence has significantly shaped TIDC's newest works, from *Communion* to *Soles* and *Push*. Hoy recently co-choreographed her first full-length piece, *An Sorcas (The Circus)*, which saw its preview in Tokyo and world premiere at Chicago's Auditorium Theatre in 2019.

In the dance studio, Hoy finds the creative process to be a rewarding and therapeutic combination of fluid expression and technical configuration. She is a game changer with a big vision, motivated by the ability this art form has to deeply connect strangers and friends alike.

Hoy grew up dancing competitively for the Wick School of Irish Dance in Denver, Colorado. She joined TIDC in 2014 after she began her studies at Loyola University Chicago. She graduated in 2017 with bachelor's degrees in psychology and photography. In addition to helping guide the company's future, she is a professional photographer, dance instructor and visual artist. Hoy's love of empowering children through the arts continues to shape TIDC's outreach programming.

A powerful activist and artist, she has been entrusted with TIDC's ethos and future.

Ali Doughty (Artistic Associate)

Doughty started dancing at the age of eight with the McDade School of Irish Dance in Philadelphia, PA. After moving to Ohio to attend the University of Dayton in 2012, she continued her competitive dancing career with The Academy in Columbus, Ohio. While balancing her studies in exercise physiology, Doughty continued to compete internationally and was ultimately crowned World Champion in 2014. Upon her graduation, Philadelphia-born Doughty moved to Chicago to join the TIDC movement and begin her evolution from formidable competitor to a limitless performing artist while receiving her doctorate in physical therapy at Northwestern University. With a seamless blend of aerial grace and percussive power, Doughty connects with audiences on a deep level. She is part of a nucleus of company members that are carrying the TIDC legacy to new heights.

Michael Donnellan (Contributing Choreographer)

Donnellan began his Irish dancing career at five years old. In the last 30 years, he has won two solo World Championship titles, as well as titles at the All Ireland, British National, Munster and Great Britain championships. Donnellan is a former leading male performer of both *Riverdance* and *Lord of the Dance*. In 1999, he turned his talents to directorial and choreographic work with Star Entertainment's *Magic of the Dance* and later took the role of director of choreography of Retfar Entertainment's *The Rhythms of Ireland*, both of which continue to see his work performed on a nightly basis. Now, Donnellan is a choreographer of Danceperados of Ireland and the director of dance at Raglan Road at Disney World Resort Florida. He is a qualified physical education teacher from Brunel University London, and holds a master's degree in dance performance from the University of Limerick. As a qualified TCRG and ADCRG, Donnellan is the director of the Donnellan School of Irish Dance in Ennis Co. Clare, Ireland, which also has a branch near Hamburg, Germany. He holds workshops in Lisbon, Spain and regularly performs with the world-renowned Kilfenora Ceili Band and Fusion Fighters.

Michelle Dorrance (Choreographer)

Dorrance is a New York City-based performer and choreographer and is the artistic director of Dorrance Dance. Mentored by Gene Medler (North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble), she was lucky to study under many of the last master hoofers. Career highlights include: *STOMP*, *Imagine Tap!*, *Charlie's Angels/Chasing the Bird*, *ti dii*, Mable Lee's *Dancing Ladies*, and solo work ranging from *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* to collaborations with Damian Woetzel, and commissions for ABT and the Martha Graham Dance Company. A 2017 Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellow and 2015 MacArthur Fellow, Dorrance holds a BA from New York University and is a Capezio Athlete.

Michael Gardiner (Contributing Choreographer)

Gardiner started Irish dancing in Denver, Colorado at the age of five. He won the Western Regional Oireachtas four times and competed all over the United States. In 2006, Gardiner moved with his family to Clarinbridge, Co. Galway and joined the Hession School of Irish Dancing. With the tutelage of the Hession teachers, he won many regional and national titles, including the Connacht Championships, British Nationals, Great Britians, All Scotlands, All Irelands, Irish Nationals and ultimately, back-to-back World Championships. Gardiner retired from competitive dancing in 2015 after winning his second world title. Also, he and his brother Matthew made Irish dance history by becoming the first brothers in 30 years to simultaneously win the World Championships. Gardiner has performed with the Kilfenora Ceili Band, Fusion Fighters, and recently returned from *Riverdance's* winter tour of China. He is drawn to TIDC because of its unique balance of innovation with tradition. He is a keen lover of Irish dance and music and recently graduated with a bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Limerick.

Melinda Sullivan (Choreographer)

Sullivan is a Los Angeles-based artist with a diverse career in dance, television and theatre. A *So You Think You Can Dance* top 10 finalist and all-star, Sullivan's toured with Disney's *High School Musical* and *Cats*. Film and television credits include *La La Land*, *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*, *The Academy Awards*, *The Late Late Show with James Corden*, *Glee* and *A Legendary Christmas with John Legend*. As a choreographer, Sullivan is a recipient of the Capezio A.C.E. Award and *Dance Magazine's* "25 to Watch." She recently has been a guest artist with Dorrance Dance, premiering new work as a collaborator at the Joyce and Jacob's Pillow. Sullivan is on faculty at the Colburn School in Los Angeles and continues to teach, perform and choreograph worldwide. melindasullivan.com @realmelsully

CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN (Guitar/Vocals)

Devlin is a Chicago-based musician who began playing guitar at eight years old. He has since grown as a multi-instrumentalist trained in piano, drums, accordion, fiddle and more. Devlin has been a collaborator with varied musical acts across the country. Dedicated to community and culture, Devlin is a founding member of the Treehouse Collective, which owns one of the most prestigious recording studios in Chicago. Devlin is often found contributing to Chicago's DIY community, a common core known for concerts in obscure and odd locations that has taken the city by storm. Devlin is currently playing with the Chicago band Rookie, and is working on opening The Workshop, an accessible studio for Chicago artists in need of a space to create. Devlin took his first trip to Japan with the company in 2016, and is incredibly honored to share his talents with TIDC on international stages.

Jake James (Fiddle and bódhran)

James is a two-time All-Ireland fiddle champion, bódhran player and dancer from Queens, New York. James started playing the fiddle at age seven and is a student of Niall Mulligan, Co. Antrim. He started playing bodhrán at 13 years old and studied with Eamon Murray, of Beoga. James has won the trophy at the Mid-Atlantic Fleadh Cheoil seven years in a row on bodhrán and has won the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil two times on fiddle. He studied Irish dance with Dublin-born Niall O'Leary from the age of three. Over the years, he has performed and taught at different venues and events including the Great American Irish Festival in Frankfort, the Irish Arts Center, Symphony Space, BB King's, Joanie Madden's Folk'N Irish Cruise, Gracie Mansion and Carnegie Hall.

Brendan O'Shea (Guitar/Vocals/Composer)

O'Shea is a singer-songwriter originally from Killarney, Ireland who moved to the United States in the late 90's. Since then, he has become a veteran of New York City's songwriter scene and has released two albums that have garnered praise from critics and press around the world. Irish music magazine *HotPress* rated his last release *Be Here Still* an 8 1/2 out of 10 and XM Radio's Mike Morrone called it one of his favorite records of the year. O'Shea's songs can also be heard in such films as Ron Howard's Academy Award-nominated film *Backdraft* and the wildly successful Karen Gehres documentary *Begging Naked*. In addition to headlining his own shows in both the United States and Europe, O'Shea has embarked on two tours of Japan in collaboration with the Trinity Irish Dance Company as well as sharing stages with his contemporaries The Frames, The Swell Season, Cowboy Junkies, 10,000 Maniacs, Elliott Smith and Interpol to name a few. In 2007, O'Shea became a founding member of Fairplay Collective, a unique endeavor in which songwriters come together to support and promote each other's individual projects as independent artists. In 2008, O'Shea and friends began hosting a successful Sunday night concert series in NYC's East Village called the Scratcher Sessions which features musicians from around the world. With or without a guitar in hand, O'Shea excels at drawing people in. O'Shea's latest album *Midatlantic Ghost*, a beautiful acoustic record with songs of leaving and song of love, is available on iTunes. brendanoshea.com

Steven Rutledge (Percussionist)

Rutledge is a Chicago-based freelance musician and music instructor with a strong passion for playing and teaching music. He is a proficient drummer and percussionist, and is also well-versed in guitar, bass guitar and keyboards. Steven grew up playing music professionally in his hometown of Portland, OR. He studied sociology and education at the University of Oregon in Eugene, OR, and moved to Chicago in 2010 to pursue a music degree at Columbia College Chicago. He played with various ensembles at Columbia College and spent three years studying privately with Chicago-based musician Tom Hipskind, who is currently one of the most sought-after drummers in Chicago. Rutledge graduated in 2013 with a BA in drum set and percussion performance and a minor emphasis in music business. Rutledge has worked with several premiere Chicago acts, including Woo Park, Nasty Snacks, North By North and Hanna Ashbrook, and he is currently the drummer for Luke Henry and Hunnybear, and Alpaca Smokes. He joined the TIDC band in 2018 for his first tour of Japan.

Garvin Jellison (Production Manager)

Jellison is a designer who has worked with Seanachai Theater, Chicago Flamenco, Pride Films and Plays, Ballet Legere, The Artistic Home, The Joffrey Ballet, Redtwist Theatre and others. Jellison has also worked with Links Hall, Lookingglass Theater Company and Chicago Shakespeare. Jellison was the production stage manager for Hubbard Street 2 in 2013 and was general manager for Haven Theatre Company until 2015. Jellison holds a BFA from the Theatre School at DePaul University.

J. Arthur Franjoine (Stage Manager/Lighting Director)

Franjoine is a lighting artist interested in creating environments that have potential to trigger visceral responses within the subconscious. Franjoine often works at the intersection of gender, identity and dysphoria, and is invested in working with collaborators who aspire to create visual utopian metamorphoses. Franjoine believes performance should be able to transform into gas, float into the mind and cause sublimation. Franjoine is a design associate of Al Crawford (Lighting Direction/Alvin Ailey) and works with Arc3Design, a cross-genre design group dedicated to merging theatrical aesthetic into all areas of art, architecture, dance, live music, theatre, broadcast and live event production. josephfranjoine.com

Al Crawford (Lighting Designer)

Crawford has been the lighting director of the world renowned Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater since 1998. Now in his 20th season with the famed company, he has produced the lighting for Ailey in virtually every major theatre, performing arts center and opera house on the planet having toured to 48 states and over 60 countries including historically significant performances in Russia, China and South Africa. Crawford has designed 18 new works for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and 12 for Ailey II. Additionally, he has

been responsible for maintaining the lighting for the significant Ailey repertory designed by many of the top lighting designers in the industry. A huge believer in cross-genre design, Crawford founded Arc3design, a lighting design group dedicated to merging his theatrical aesthetic into all areas of art, architecture, dance, live music, theatre, broadcast and live event production. Arc3design employs a team of talented designers and technical artists that support the creation and implementation of new projects worldwide.