

The Bríd Dower Band



Featuring the vocals of one of the finest performers in Irish music today, the Bríd Dower Band presents an impressive arrangement of traditional, well-loved folk and contemporary Irish songs. Singing in both the English & Irish languages, Bríd has a stunning ability to interpret each song, and breathe into each one new life & meaning.

Bríd has been a leading figure in the Phoenix Irish music scene for the last ten years, singing with local Irish rock group Ashling, since shortly after she emigrated from Ireland. Ashling's debut CD 'Every Waking Hour' was very well received in the Irish community, and helped prime Bríd for her solo career. With the release of her new CD 'Comings And Goings', Bríd's voice has matured into one of stunning clarity and unsurpassed beauty.

Joining Bríd in the line-up is Tom Bertling on guitar & vocals, Kevin Mauch on bass guitar and Ryan Bowman on percussion & drums. Whenever possible, Welsh flute & whistle virtuoso John Good adds his talents to the team.

Contact Bríd for more information via email at brid@briddower.com, or by phone at (602) 625-3607.

CD REVIEW - Bríd Dower's "Comings and Goings"

George O'Brien, Arizona Irish Music Society

Ireland is well known for producing outstanding female vocalists: Mary and Francis Black, Maura O'Connell, Mary Dillon, Niamh Parson, and Karan Casey to name but a few. After listening to the Bríd Dower CD, it is time to add the name of Bríd Dower to that list.

Bríd was born and raised in Waterford where she developed her love for singing. It was in Waterford where she performed regularly with Karan Casey (formerly lead singer in the supergroup Solas). After moving to Phoenix, Bríd has performed with various groups, most notably the band Ashling. In spite of her success at doing up tempo pub music and Celtic rock, many people begged her to a CD of ballads. The result is absolutely stunning.

Bríd has an extraordinary voice and gives a special warmth to ballads. I have witnessed her to start singing at a seisiún and have the entire pub go completely silent as people stop to listen. In putting together "Comings and Goings", Bríd teamed up with Gerry O'Beirne of County Clare. Gerry has a well deserved reputation for being one of the finest guitar players anywhere as evidenced by his touring with Andy Stewart and performing with the band "Patrick Street". He is also a very well regarded song writer as is shown by the opening tract "The Shades of Gloria". Gerry is only slightly less well known as arranger and record producer. Gerry is considered especially good at working with female vocalists. Last spring he worked with Maura O'Connell. His decision to work with Bríd is just one indication of how good she is.

In addition to Gerry O'Beirne on guitar, there is an outstanding collection of musicians accompanying Bríd: John Good on whistle and flute, Kevin Mauch on bass, Jerica Leathers on fiddle, Jimmy Peggie on upright bass, Billy Parker on mandolin, Don Charles on tenor banjo, Deb Gessner on concertina, Ryan Bowman on hand drum, and Steve Colby on bouzouki. "Comings and Goings" was recorded and mixed by Kyle Harris.

It is almost impossible to single out any particular track because the overall impact of this CD is marvelous.

1. The Shades of Gloria: Guitar - Gerry O'Beirne, Electric Upright Bass - Kevin Mauch Tin Whistle - John Good
2. The Nobleman's Wedding: Guitar - Gerry O'Beirne, Mandolin - Billy Parker, Violin - Jerica Leathers
3. Dark Inisheoghain: Guitar - Gerry O'Beirne, Tin Whistle - John Good, Upright bass - Jimmy Peggie
4. The Constant Lovers: Guitar - Gerry O'Beirne, Electric Upright Bass - Kevin Mauch, Tenor Banjo - Don Charles, Concertina - Deb Gessner
5. Fear an Bhata: Guitar - Gerry O'Beirne, Upright bass - Jimmy Peggie, Flute - John Good
6. A Stór Mo Chroí: unaccompanied.
7. The Man From Tralee: Guitars - Gerry O'Beirne, Fretless Bass- Kevin Mauch, Violins - Jerica Leathers, Hand drum - Ryan Bowman
8. Isle of St. Helena: Guitars - Gerry O'Beirne, Electric Upright Bass - Kevin Mauch, Mandolin - Billy Parker, Accordion - Deb Gessner, Tenor Banjo - Don Charles
9. Where Are You Tonight I Wonder?: Arranged - Bríd Dower, Gerry O'Beirne, Guitar - Gerry O'Beirne, Electric Upright Bass - Kevin Mauch, Flute - John Good
10. Bruach na Carraige Báine: 6- and 12-string Guitars & Ukulele - Gerry O'Beirne, Violin - Jerica Leathers, Electric Upright Bass - Kevin Mauch, Flute - John Good
11. The Orphan's Wedding: Guitar - Gerry O'Beirne, Upright bass - Jimmy Peggie, Bouzouki - Steve Colby
12. One I Love: unaccompanied.

"Comings and Goings" will be released September 15th and should not be missed. For more information, send email to brid@briddower.com, or send SASE to: 1424 E. Woodman Drive, Tempe AZ 85283 USA Web: www.briddower.com

(This review is also available on the web at http://www.azirishmusic.com/Article_08302003.htm)

Bio – Bríd Dower

Bríd Dower was born & raised in Waterford, Ireland, into a very musical, but not very musically active family. Both her parents had been heavily involved in Waterford's light opera society in their youth, but by the time Bríd came along, they had more or less left that behind them.

Bríd was consequently exposed to music more through the media at the time than in any other way. Her musical influences were shaped by those of her three older brothers, which included everything from Sting & the Police to Kansas & BTO, as well as by the music being played on radio & television at the time. Despite being called upon to sing lead roles at all the school shows, Bríd didn't venture much into performing until her college days. She recalls being broke during the summer holidays from college, and she & her partner at the time, Gerry Cox, took to busking in the streets of Waterford, as a way to earn some cash.

Street singing did a lot for Bríd's confidence and to strengthen her voice, and following that summer, she & Gerry began playing the local pub scene on a regular basis, and quickly became a staple part of the local music scene. It was during this time that Bríd was first introduced to the local trad. sessions, where she picked up many old & new songs, and began to nurture a love for traditional Irish music & song. In the couple of years that followed, Bríd performed with a variety of different local players, among them Karan Casey, and she learned and shaped her music ability from each one of them.

Bríd left Waterford in 1992 for Phoenix, Arizona, initially for a short trip, but ended up settling there, where she was able to broaden her musical horizons even further. There she met with local fiddle master Sheila Maguire, and over the course of several permutations, the celtic rock band Ashling was born. Ashling dominated the local Irish music scene for many years, and with the release of their debut album 'Every Waking Hour', firmly established Bríd as the premiere Irish singer in the Phoenix Valley.

Despite Ashling's success, Bríd had longed to perform a repertoire of more sensitive Irish music. The influence of artists like Solas, Karan Casey, Niamh Parsons, Mary Dillon & Maura O'Connell only fueled Bríd's determination even further to bring a different style of Irish music to the valley than people were used to hearing. The opening of the Irish Cultural Center in Phoenix provided the perfect setting in which to introduce such music, and there Bríd found an extremely receptive audience, eager to hear her perform some of her most tender & beloved songs, both in the English & Irish language.

In November of 2002, Bríd had the opportunity to collaborate with Gerry O'Beirne, and work on her new CD "Comings And Goings" began. Over the course of the next few months, she & Gerry recorded the album, and for most of 2003, Bríd has been refining the work, adding more instruments, and a couple of her favorite a cappella pieces. In addition to Gerry on guitars & ukulele, Bríd is accompanied by an outstanding collection of musicians: John Good on whistle and flute, Kevin Mauch on electric upright & fretless bass, Jerica Leathers on fiddle, Jimmy Peggie on upright bass, Billy Parker on mandolin, Don Charles on tenor banjo, Deb Gessner on concertina, Ryan Bowman on hand drum, and Steve Colby on bouzouki. The result speaks for itself, and the CD is a testament to Bríd's ability & passion for the music she performs. Following the birth of her baby, Bríd is now firmly back behind the microphone.

bríd dower



comings and goings