

NEWS RELEASE

UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 19, 2007

**WHAT: UMass FINE ARTS CENTER Center Series presents:
Cherish the Ladies- A Celtic Christmas Celebration**

WHEN: Wednesday, December 12, 7:30pm

**WHERE: Fine Arts Center Concert Hall
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or
go online to www.fineartscenter.com/tickets**

**IMAGES: To download images relating to this press release please go online to
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(Cherish the Ladies to Bring Celtic Christmas Charm to UMass Fine Arts Center)

With their spectacular blend of instrumental talents, beautiful vocals, captivating arrangements and stunning step dancing, Cherish the Ladies combines all facets of Celtic culture in an immensely warm, humorous and entertaining event-- the perfect complement to our New England winter chill. Cherish the Ladies will be performing Wednesday, December 12 at 7:30pm in the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall.

This powerhouse group features Grammy Award winner Joanie Madden on whistle, flute and vocals; Mary Coogan on guitar, mandolin and banjo; Heidi Talbot on vocals and bodhrán; Mirella Murray on accordion piano; and Roisín Dillon on fiddle. Joining the Ladies for this concert are Kathleen Boyle on the accordion and piano, Dan Stacey on fiddle and step dancing, and Eileen Golden, Michael Boyle And Noelle Curran performing the traditional step dancing.

The Ladies have done several highly successful Celtic Christmas tours over the past few years. The holiday presentation has quickly become a very popular attraction, in addition to their free-wheeling and funny, fast and furious musical evenings for which they are known worldwide. Traditional Irish melodies and carols such as "The Holly and the Berry" and "The Wexford Carol" are interspersed with well-known Christmas carols including "O Come All Ye Faithful", "What Child Is This", "The Little Drummer Boy", "We Three Kings", and more. All of the arrangements are brought forth with a new freshness by the use of the group's unique Celtic instrumentation and beautiful harmonies, and then heightened by the inclusion of world-class Irish step dancing.

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One of the most engaging ensembles in the history of Irish music, lively reels and jigs have audiences toe-tapping along, while hauntingly beautiful ballads conjure images of far-off lands. Cherish the Ladies "expands the annals for Irish music in America... their music is passionate, tender, and rambunctious," according to the *New York Times*. *The Boston Globe* states "Cherish the Ladies has been a leading group in the Irish traditional world for more than a decade... it is simply impossible to imagine an audience that wouldn't enjoy what they do."

Organized by folklorist/musician Mick Moloney and sponsored by the Ethnic Folk Arts Center and the National Endowment for the Arts, they began as a concert series featuring the brightest lights in Irish traditional music. Though initially the group won recognition as the first and only all-women traditional Irish band, they soon established themselves as musicians and performers without peer and have won many thousands of listeners and fans of their music. The past years have seen the group traveling all over North and South America, the United Kingdom and Europe performing in the finest concert halls and international festivals.

They have been named Best Musical Group of the Year by the BBC, Entertainment Group of the Year by the Irish Voice Newspaper, the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall's International Group of the Year Award at the Celtic Connections Festival in Scotland and voted the Top North American Celtic act by NPR Radio's "Thistle and Shamrock". They have shared the stage with such noted entertainers as James Taylor, Joan Baez, Emmy Lou Harris, The Clancy Brothers, Tommy Makem, The Chieftains and dozens of symphony orchestras. The "Celtic Album", their collaboration with the Boston Pops Symphony led to a 1999 Grammy nomination.

The Ladies have recorded ten highly acclaimed albums. Their quintessential holiday album "On Christmas Night" was released to rave reviews and was chosen as one of the top Christmas Albums of the Year by The New York Times, Washington Post, The Village Voice and many other nationally syndicated Newspapers. They have appeared on CBS This Morning, Good Morning America, Evening at Pops, C-Span, PBS and National Public Radio in the United States and on BBC and RTE radio and television overseas. At the Summer Olympics in Atlanta, they were chosen to represent Irish music and culture at the Official Cultural Olympiad.

Tickets are \$35, \$25 and \$15, Youth 17 and under are \$12 and Five College Students are \$15, \$10 and \$7. For tickets and information, call the Fine Arts Center Box office at 413-545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS, or go online to www.fineartscenter.com. This performance is sponsored by sponsored by Coca Cola, Easthampton Savings Bank, Cooley Dickinson Hospital, Rainbow Times and 93.9 The River.

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