



NEWS RELEASE

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"Effects of complexity and syncopation that astounded," – New York Times

Mark Howard's Trinity Irish Dance Company Premieres *A Very Irish Christmas* at The Soraya

Recognized as the source of progressive Irish Dance, TIDC delivers "*Traditions With a Twist*"!

Sat, Dec. 9 at 3pm; Tickets start at \$39 and are available at TheSoraya.org.

After the show, join TIDC dancers in the lobby for a meet and greet with the company!

(Los Angeles, CA) Nov. 28, 2023 —The unique power and grace of Chicago's internationally-renowned **Trinity Irish Dance Company (TIDC)** comes to **The Soraya** with an exclusive holiday performance. "Sophisticated and commanding" (*Los Angeles Times*) and "impossibly complex" (*The New York Times*), the company is the birthplace of progressive Irish Dance, an innovative movement genre that "ushered in a new era for Irish step dance" (*Chicago Tribune*).

Audiences will experience the uncanny precision and levity of this charismatic holiday performance complete with a live band fronted by lead singer and Ireland-native **Brendan O'Shea**. While the company's foundations are based on Irish Dance, it is known as the most innovative Irish dance company — and is the only of its kind in the performing arts circuit worldwide.

The strength of TIDC's mission brings dancers and musicians together from around the globe. In contrast to commercial dance productions that promote sameness, TIDC celebrates uniqueness and individuals who will bring the work to life in dynamic ways.

“Our repertoire is steeped in Irish traditions, but we push the boundaries of what’s possible for this form through collaborations and a fresh approach.” Associate Artistic Director Chelsea Hoy said. “Our dancers represent 12 different states, Canada, England, and Mexico — it’s a myth that you have to be Irish to be an Irish dancer...I’m Norwegian!”

TIDC is on a mission to save the integrity of Irish dance from the overly commercialized productions that have become synonymous with the form. They have increasingly been winning that battle through an innovative vision and diverse repertoire. The Soraya’s Dec. 9 show is the Chicago-based company’s first-ever specific Irish Christmas show.

“It’s very special and exclusive to The Soraya,” Hoy said. “Through movement and music, audiences will be immersed in the holiday spirit, celebrating in TIDC fashion: traditions with a twist!”

By “with a twist” Hoy explained that TIDC is focused on ensuring the future of Irish Dance is fresh, innovative, and inclusive. The same applies to the live music that’s an integral part of TIDC, featuring lead vocalist Brendan O’Shea, Jake James on fiddle and Bodhrán, Chris Devlin on guitar, and percussionist Steve Rutledge. Hoy said the evening will put people of all backgrounds into the holiday spirit pre-show, during the show, and after the show, when the Company continues its tradition of entering the lobby to meet fans old and new.

For tickets and interview requests, please contact:

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- ACCESS YOUR PRESS KIT [HERE](#).
- To watch the Company’s trailer, [click here](#).

For questions or ticket information, visit www.TheSoraya.org or call the Ticket Office at (818) 677-3000. Office hours are 11a-4p, Tuesday through Saturday.

About Trinity Irish Dance Company

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. Founded in 1990, this innovative, nonprofit, repertory 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 “ushered in a new era for Irish step dance” (Chicago Tribune), opening 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 The 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.

About Founding Artistic Director/Choreographer Mark Howard

For more than three decades, Howard 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 the age of eight at the Dennehy School of Irish Dance. He began teaching when he was only 17 years old, and by 20 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. As a competitive coach and choreographer, he would go on to redefine what was possible for American teams becoming the first to win gold in all categories.

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 himself was a regular guest on The Tonight Show starring Johnny Carson from 1989 until Carson's retirement in 1991 and has accumulated a multitude of national and international television credits including The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, CBS This Morning, Late Night with Conan O'Brien, The Today Show, Live with Regis, Good Morning America, Martha, CONAN, and 1st Look, to name a few. From PBS and Network specials to extensive film work for Disney, Touchstone, Universal, and Dream Works, 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 continues to choreograph new works, as well as expand his independent career to work in theater, television, concert, and film. The feature film screenplay SOLES, which focuses on Howard and Trinity, is currently in the works. Howard's work in the arts has led to numerous Choreographer's Fellowships awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Howard has been named three times as one of Irish American Magazine's "Top 100 Irish Americans," and he was honored by iBAM! in 2011 and in 2015 by Chicago's Lawyers For the Creative Arts for his outstanding contribution to the performing arts.

About the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)

The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for The Performing Arts (The Soraya) is an award-winning, state-of-the-art 1,700-seat theatre designed and built by HGA Architects and Engineers and opened in January 2011 as the Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC). Through a transformative gift by Younes and Soraya Nazarian the venue was renamed as The Soraya in 2017. Vibrant programming has served to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley and its 1.8 million residents, and as one of the top arts and culture venues in Southern California. Since its inaugural season, The Soraya has presented over 500 artists and companies across the genres of music, dance, theater and film and is a highly in demand location for filming and rental events.

The Soraya's 2023/2024 Season boldly advances the expansive sound of orchestras both traditional and contemporary; the freestyle vibe of jazz; an array of dance luminaries, and a cultural bounty drawn from the musical well of global voices. The Soraya continues its vigorous commitment to innovating, excelling, and amplifying access by offering a wide variety of performances that reflect Los Angeles' many distinctive communities and featuring new and original work and artists from the local region as well as nationally and around the world.

Located on the vibrant campus of California State University Northridge (CSUN), The Soraya and the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication share an integral link that enhances student access and opportunities in the arts and performing arts. A \$5 million contribution from record producer and former California Lieutenant Governor Mike Curb was pivotal in ensuring the completion and opening of The Soraya in 2011. For his founding support and in acknowledgment of the integral relationship between the Mike Curb College and The Soraya, Mike Curb is recognized as one of The Soraya's Cornerstone Benefactors. This partnership fosters academic and artistic excellence, elevating the talents and the future growth of CSUN's students through master classes, student tickets, concerts of student ensembles, and students appearing alongside renowned artists such as Wynton Marsalis, Aida Cuevas, and Martha Graham Dance Company.

For Calendar Listing

What: A Very Irish Christmas
Presented by Trinity Irish Dance Company

When: Saturday, Dec. 9 at 3pm

Where: Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)
18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330

Website: www.TheSoraya.org

Ticket Office: 818-677-3000

Soraya Press Contacts

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