

# *Triptych*

**Triptych is a vivacious three-part ensemble featuring fiddler Laura Risk, guitarist / percussionist / vocalist Paddy League, and dancer Kieran Jordan. This remarkable trio delivers elegant and soulful renderings of traditional music and step dance, from Irish, Scottish, and French-Canadian traditions.**



Each of these artists began performing professionally as a teenager — Laura in San Francisco, Paddy in Washington, DC, and Kieran in Philadelphia — and each has established an impressive solo career. Their talents in traditional music and dance have taken them to premier performance venues throughout North American and Europe. Together as Triptych, they create a tasteful yet gutsy sound and a visually invigorating live concert performance. Trio performances to date include, among others, the Festival Mémoire et Racines (Québec), "A St. Patrick's Day Celtic Sojourn" with nationally-syndicated radio host Brian O'Donovan, and the Touhill Performing Arts Center at the University of Missouri, St. Louis.

Triptych formed in 2006, but prior to that, Laura and Paddy were already touring as a duo, playing venues such as The Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage (Washington, D.C.), the University of South Florida, Georgia Southern University, as well as Boston's legendary Club Passim. Meanwhile, Laura and Kieran were living as neighbors in Somerville, Massachusetts. Their friendship — and their inventive fiddle-and-dance collaborations — took root in the fertile stomping ground of Boston's thriving Celtic music scene.

Laura's fiddle playing takes listeners on an emotional journey through a diverse repertoire of traditional music, yet with a contemporary sensibility. She soars through passionate and expansive slow jigs and airs, and is equally masterful at driving through reels and other dance tunes with an irresistible groove. Her expressive, versatile playing has been described by filmmaker Ken Burns as "a revelation and achingly beautiful." Laura has toured with Cordelia's Dad, Ensemble Galilei, Greenfire, the John Whelan Band, and in a duo with percussive dancer Sandy Silva, performing at Celtic Connections (Scotland), Celtic Colours (Cape Breton Island), London's Barbican Centre, and the Newport, Winnipeg and Philadelphia Folk Festivals. She has over ten albums to her credit, including a Boston

Globe "Top Ten Albums of the Year," and her music was recently included on the soundtrack to the PBS series *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*.

Paddy's intuitive accompaniment style — on bodhran, guitar, and bouzouki — provides irresistible rhythm and a distinctive Triptych sound. With a life-long passion for both Irish and Greek traditional music, Paddy is a multi-instrumentalist who is also influenced by many of the world's vernacular and art music traditions, from the Mediterranean to Brazil. He exhibits vitality and a natural touch on every instrument, and an exceptional ability to respond to often hidden nuances in a tune. His renderings of traditional songs, along with many of his own instrumental compositions, highlight his multi-faceted musicianship and bring great variety to the group's repertoire. Paddy has performed extensively throughout North America, Brazil, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, and Europe, and been featured on over one hundred recordings.

Kieran's step dancing adds energy and sensuality on stage, as well as another component of rhythm and sound. She brings a musical, improvisational approach to solo Irish dance — the *Boston Irish Reporter* calls her "a living musical instrument." Kieran trained for many years in traditional Irish step dancing (starting at age five) and she later immersed herself in Cape Breton step dance, modern dance, and especially sean-nós (old style) Irish dance. In demand as a performer, choreographer, and teacher, Kieran has been honored with a Massachusetts *Artist Fellowship* and *Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Grant*. She has toured as a solo dancer throughout North America and Europe, and she holds a Master's Degree in Contemporary Dance from University of Limerick, Ireland. In Boston, she has served as Dance Director for *A Christmas Celtic Sojourn*, since 2004. Kieran's unique style with Triptych is subtle, yet sophisticated; her footwork is careful, yet carefree. With a physical presence that is both grounded and expansive, her dancing sends warmth and wonder from the stage.

Triptych's new self-titled release conveys musical wizardry with exceptional taste. Unusual percussion parts, new compositions, and new steps explore the edges of traditional music and dance. The clarity and presence of each instrument shines through, and creates an overall sound that is fresh, uncluttered, and representative of the group's fluid, improvisational playing and their memorable concert performances.