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## **TOP PAN-CELTIC GROUP IONA CELEBRATES 25 YEARS TOGETHER WITH THE RELEASE OF SILVER!!!**

The seminal, traditional pan Celtic band IONA, based in the Washington, DC area, has produced yet another distinguished collection of music and dance from all the Celtic cultures that have culminated in America. IONA's eleventh recording, **Silver** is a spirited collage of arrangements that combines songs and tunes from, for example, Bolivia, Galicia and Texas or Louisiana, Appalachia and Québec. Together for twenty-five years, IONA has toured throughout the British Isles, the United States and Canada: band members have researched much of their material in the cultures of their origin, and bring well over a century of collective professional musicianship to this CD.

**Release information:** IONA's MD CD release will be celebrated Monday, Nov 7 at the Institute of Musical Traditions, 10701 Old Georgetown Rd., Rockville, MD, in a double bill with Alan (Battlefield Band) Reid & Rob Van Sante. Doors open at 7:30 p.m., tickets \$20: [www.imtfolk.org](http://www.imtfolk.org). In VA, the release concert will be held at the Fall Concerts of Trad Celtic Music at the Old Brogue Irish Pub in the Snuggery, 760-C Walker Rd., Great Falls, VA 22066 on Sunday, Nov 20 at 5 & 7 p.m. (2 separate sittings). Reservations should be made by calling the Brogue at 703-759-3309. More info: <http://www.ionamusic.com/brogue.shtml>.

**Band Members:** IONA currently is: founders **Barbara Tresidder Ryan** (lead vocals, bouzouki, bodhrán and "pieds" (foot percussion)) and **Bernard Argent** (wooden flute, whistles, vocals, doumbek and cabasa), **Chuck Lawhorn** (bass guitars and vocals), **Jim Queen** (fiddle, banjo and vocals) and **Kathleen Larrick** (footwork, vocals and percussion). Ryan, whose voice has been described as "warm and rich as dark honey", sings many of her songs in the diverse Celtic languages, while all the band members have contributed to the harmonies, steering IONA in a new multi-vocal direction. Argent's distinctive flute/whistle and percussion styles have been a mainstay of IONA's sound since its inception: on *Silver*, his baritone harmonies anchor the chorus.

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Queen brings three decades of performance with the Air Force Band with him: his fiddle and Argent's flute weave tight licks and harmonies, and his banjo contributes an essential driving force and Appalachian vigor. Professional dancer Larrick has created her own essential niche in IONA, not only through her augmentation of rhythm dimensions, but as a strong singer as well. Bass guitarist Lawhorn has held down the low end and the band's beat for eleven years now, and has lately taken to arranging some of the harmonies.

**Band Background:** In 1986, Barbara Tresidder Ryan and Bernard Argent joined forces with Barbara Seymour and Alan Oresky to create IONA, named after a Hebridean Island off the west coast of Scotland that has been synonymous with Celtic culture for 3,000 years. There have been 15 band members since IONA's inception, each of whom has molded the band into its present form. Ryan and Argent have continued to be the core of the band from the outset, leading it through an evolution that encompasses music and dance from all the Celtic lands: Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, Brittany (France), Asturias and Galicia (Spain), and, of course, America, the biggest Celtic melting pot in the world.

IONA is endorsed by both the Virginia Commission for the Arts and Capitol Region Performing Arts Touring Programs (through the Maryland State Arts Council), and is considered an important source of educational programs and workshops.

IONA's previous recordings, *Iona*, *Off the Beaten Track*, *Back to Our Roots*, *Holding Our Own*, *Nutmeg & Ginger*, *Sound of Iona*, *Birken Tree*, *Branching Out*, *A Celebration of Twenty and Mid-Winter Light* have all received kudos and awards worldwide. Each has been carefully researched and diligently engineered. Find samples of critical comments below.

### **Quotes:**

"The best Celtic music America has to offer" Steve Winick, *Dirty Linen Magazine*

"This is the real stuff as far as Celtic goes, and these are authentic, versed musicians... The members of IONA look to be story tellers, song collectors (and) explorers. A trip to IONA is a fascinating journey." *Music Monthly Regional Review of Branching Out* by Kyf Brewer

"The instrumental combinations are well thought through, and changes within sets are unobtrusive. They are careful with their source material and will command the respect of enthusiasts for the tradition. IONA are going to be compared with young and talented innovators like Anam, as well as long established masters like Ossian or the House Band." Mike

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O'Connor, Cornish World

“This one is going to be made fairly easy for everyone involved. With A Celebration Of Twenty, IONA has assembled a 2 CD set which displays that they are, in no uncertain terms, the best traditional Celtic band working today.” Ray Dorsey, Chaos Realm

**Notes on Silver:** The material covered on the CD is primarily traditional in derivation, with dynamic, original arrangements by the group as an entity. Drawing on the wealth of historical material available, IONA prefers the time tested quality of traditional music to modern composition. The powerful end product is the result of extensive research and assistance by prominent musicians from many of the parent Celtic countries.

The CD was recorded, mixed and mastered at Shuman Recording in Falls Church, VA by Scott Shuman, and the Shetland Set recorded at a live concert at In Your Ear Studio in Richmond, VA. Steven Parke of Baltimore, MD photographed and designed the cover.

This project was funded in part through Kickstarter.com to which about a hundred of the band's fans, friends and family contributed.

**Press Contact:** For more information or if you have questions, please call or e-mail Barbara T. Ryan, President of Barnaby Productions, Inc. at 703-426-1450 or ionavoic@pobox.com.

A high resolution print quality photo can be downloaded from the IONA website at

<http://www.ionamusic.com/press.htm>.