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Altan brings Celtic music to Missoula

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Jan. 10, 2001

Contact: Tom Webster, director, University Theatre Productions, (406) 243-2853.

ALTAN BRINGS CELTIC MUSIC TO MISSOULA

MISSOULA-

Legendary Celtic musicians Altan will perform in concert in Missoula in February, with an opening performance by Montana's own Willson & McKee.

The concert will begin at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 16, in the University Theatre on The University of Montana campus. Advance tickets are \$19 for general admission, \$17 for students or \$21 the day of the show. They are available at Tic-It-E-Z outlets or by calling (888) MONTANA or 243-4051 in Missoula.

Few traditional Irish bands have had a wider impact on audiences and music lovers throughout the world than Altan. With their award-winning recordings, ranging from old Irish songs to hard-hitting reels and jigs, and with their dynamic live performances, Altan has moved audiences from Tokyo to Seattle.

"Altan continues to be one of the Celtic world's great treasures," wrote a Los Angeles Times reviewer last August, "gifted with a front line – fiddlers Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh and Ciaran Tourish and button accordionist Dermot Byrne – that is a sheer powerhouse.

"They often began with relatively tranquil openings," the reviewer continued, "then suddenly shifted tempo into a hard-driving traditional jig or reel, generating irrepressible, foot-

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tapping rhythms. By the time they were halfway through the set, many of the aisles were filled with audience members attempting their own animated versions of step dancing.”

The seeds of Altan lie in the music and fun of gatherings and sessions in kitchens and pubs in the band’s homeland of Donegal, Ireland. Beginning as a duo – Belfast flute-player Frankie Kennedy and Gweedore singer and fiddler Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh – Altan grew into a band in the mid-’80s. The band’s name was taken from Loch Altan, a deep and mysterious lake behind Errigal Mountain in Donegal.

Altan was signed to Virgin Records in 1996, the first Irish band of their kind to be signed by a major label. The band gained gold and platinum albums in Ireland and toured larger venues throughout the world, with tours in Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Europe as well as regular U.S. tours. Altan’s newest album is last year’s “Another Sky,” considered by some to be their best yet.

Visit Altan online at www.altan.ie.

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