

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING AND CINEMATIC ARTS
Boyer College of Music and Dance

World Music:

Philly Trad: Irish Music in the Philadelphia Area

John McGillian, button accordion

Allyn Miner, fiddle, concertina

Eamon Kelly, bouzouki

September 26, 2025

Temple Performing Arts Center

Friday

7:30 PM

Program

Jig Set: *Kid on the Mountain, Drops of Brandy, Boys of Ballisodare*

Reel Set: *Repeal of the Union, The Peeler's Jacket, The Torn Jacket*

Solo Set: John McGillian, button accordion

Solo Set: Eamon Kelly, bouzouki

Hornpipe Set: *The Flowing Tide, The Ebb Tide*

Allyn Miner, concertina

Reels by Known Composers: *Hunter's House, Wissahickon Drive, Lad O'Beirne's*

Special Dance Set: *The Three Tunes* (a jig and two polkas)

Reel Set – Philadelphia Favorites: *Stetson's, Donegal Reel, The Green Fields of America*

Air – an instrumental song: *Paddy's Green Shamrock Shore*

Final Set: *Lucy Campbell, Over the Moor to Maggie*

Thirteenth performance of the 2025-2026 season.

About the Artists

JOHN MCGILLIAN was born in Philadelphia in 1974. His first musical influences were his parents, Mary Boyce from Milford, County Donegal, and Kevin McGillian from Ligfordrum, County Tyrone, who started John on a button key accordion at the age of six. In the early days John's mother would lilt the tunes to him in their kitchen and his father pointed out the rudiments of musical notation. Eventually John was directed up the street to learn from accordionist John McGroary until McGroary left home for college. For John, McGroary remains a tremendous influence. Over the years John has played in a series of Irish bands that performed ballads and dance tunes. It was perhaps inevitable that John would find himself in Irish rock bands as well, an experience that he believes to be a step toward learning that his first love is Irish traditional dance music. John plays accordion with a special spirit and lift and clearly has what fellow musicians fondly refer to as "big ears" – he can hear the nuances of a tune, learn tunes quickly, and play them with a panache of originality while adhering to the traditional roots of the music.

ALLYN MINER played violin from an early age and came to Irish music later through friends and sessions around Philadelphia. She took lessons in fiddle style with Philadelphia's Brendan Callahan at the Irish Center in Germantown and was soon picking up tunes from the many fine local players, especially Kevin McGillian, John's father, and at dances, workshops, and festivals on the East Coast and in Ireland. Allyn currently leads a weekly session at the Sligo Pub in Media and is a regular player at Irish events in the area. Allyn made a career as a specialist in the music of India. She has Ph.Ds. in Indian Musicology and Sanskrit. She taught in the Department of South Asia Studies at the University of Pennsylvania and is a regular presenter in World Music classes at Temple University's Boyer College of Music.

EAMON KELLY first discovered his passion for traditional Irish music through the playing of Martin Hayes, Solas, Dervish and other great contemporary artists. He took up the bouzouki while in high school and began attending the session at Fergie's Pub in Philadelphia. His experience grew quickly during his years living in Ithaca, New York, a vibrant college town populated by some of the most accomplished trad musicians on the East coast, including Tim Ball, Mike Roddy, Ellie Goud and Mark Bickford. He also spent several months living in New York City, playing sessions with the likes of Brian Conway, Dan Neely and Niall O'Leary. After earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Cinema Production, Eamon returned to Philadelphia where he has become a mainstay in the Philadelphia trad community, playing regularly at Fergie's and at The Plough & the Stars, alongside seasoned veterans and the area's most exciting young talent. He plays an instrument custom made for him by master luthier Phillip Crump. Eamon is an active freelance film editor, and composer of original film scores. You can enjoy his work by visiting www.eamonkellymusic.com