

THE LAST RAYS OF SUNDAY Irish Traditional Music and Song

If it's Irish traditional music you're looking for, look no further—you can count on ***The Last Rays of Sunday*** to always deliver a brilliant assortment of Irish tunes and songs in “pure drop” fashion. Three highly accomplished traditional musicians seamlessly blend their many talents when they join forces as “The Rays”—Megan Bennett Irby (vocal, bodhran), Don Penzien (guitar, whistle), and Bella Issakova (fiddle)—and they never fail to delight their audiences no matter the setting!



Don Penzien has long been a top-flight performer of Irish traditional music. In addition to performing with The Rays, he frequently is on the road with *Gailfean*, the *Máirtín de Cógáin Project*, *Shared Madness*, and others. Widely acclaimed for his reserved backing style, Don's dexterous work on DADGAD-tuned guitar provides solid, driving rhythms to traditional tunes as well as perceptive and sensitive accompaniments to songs and airs.

Growing up in Wilmington, NC, **Megan Bennett Irby** began performing at a young age before her pursuit of an academic career lured her away from music. Having now completed two master's degrees and a PhD, Megan once again found the inspiration to pursue her love of music—this time in the Irish tradition. She applies her own powerful and emotive singing style to much-loved traditional songs that tell stories of revolution, liberty, loss, and love.

Many years a successful and acclaimed classical violinist, **Bella Issakova** received her classical education in the Sofia Music School in Bulgaria as well as at Tel Aviv's prestigious Thelma Yalin School. Although it was classical music that first took her around the world (e.g., she's shared the stage with such notables as Zubin Meta, Kurt Mazur, Krystian Zimmerman, Martin Chalifour among many others), a chance encounter with Irish Traditional music in 2000 compelled Bella to travel to Ireland to study the music from its source. Since 2003 Bella's travels now have her performing (as well teaching) Irish music at festivals, concerts, and tune sessions around the globe!

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