

THE COTTARS ARE SOARING!

To date, teenagers Ciarán & Fiona MacGillivray have blazed an amazing trail, having travelled the globe for six years as lead singers and instrumentalists with The Cottars, Cape Breton's fastest rising Celtic band. They've toured in Japan (twice), in Denmark, and appeared in over 30 US states—from Maine to Texas and from New York to California. They've also crossed their native Canada many times. Other career highlights include: an appearance at The Newport Folk Festival (where Bob Dylan shared the bill!); shows for Senator Ted Kennedy and Wayne Gretzky; sold-out symphony concerts; and a 25-city tour of the US with The Chieftains which featured an unforgettable evening at Carnegie Hall! In addition, they've recorded 3 CD's, have won 2 ECMA's and 2 MIANS Awards, and have starred in several television specials. They've shared the stage with such entertainers as Natalie MacMaster, Bruce Cockburn, The Barra MacNeils, Ireland's Altan and Danú, and many, many others.

The MacGillivrays both sing and stepdance, and each is a multi-instrumentalist—playing between them: piano, guitar, tin whistle, Irish bouzouki, Irish flute, bodhrán, and Celtic harp. The siblings are known on three continents for their show-stopping arrangement of The Cottars' anthem, “The Briar & The Rose”.

16-year old Claire Pettit, the youngest member of the band, is also a gifted instrumentalist, singer, composer and dancer. Accomplished on both the violin and viola, she has studied traditional Cape Breton fiddling with several of the Island's legendary masters. Her appearances with the quartet in western and eastern Canada, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Massachusetts, and across California have earned her rave reviews by music critics. *The Chronicle Herald* recently called her “a fiery fiddler with great technical command of her instrument!”

The band's lead guitarist is Bruce Timmons, one of the most respected accompanists in the Maritimes today, having toured or recorded with the best-known musicians on the East Coast—from John Allan Cameron and The Men Of The Deeps to The Rankin Family. A proud Cape Bretoner, he specializes in not only Celtic music but also jazz and contemporary styles, and his instrumental prowess & versatility have enabled the group's sound to reach new levels of excitement and originality.

Scotland's legendary songwriter Dougie MacLean calls this foursome “brilliant”, and North Americans agree. During a recent 9-city tour of Eastern Canada, audiences consistently stood and screamed for encores after the finale (and even rose to their feet once or twice early in the program), enchanted by warmth and vitality of this impressive Celtic quartet.

WHAT CRITICS HAVE SAID:

“Sparkling with beautiful musicianship, pure singing, airy melodies, and the contagious energy of Celtic instrumentation, they infuse Celtic-folk-pop with a splash of youthful vibrancy.”

—The Dallas Morning News/2006

“Exuberant exploration of the folk tradition, with polished contemporary overtones.”

—Stephen Cooke, The Halifax Herald/2006

“This band delivers an ingenious, multifaceted take on the folk music of their native Nova Scotia. With their dynamic and riveting music, captivating vocals, assured stage presence, and joyous step-dancing, they preserve essential elements of their Celtic heritage. Fiona MacGillivray, the group’s lead vocalist, is blessed with a beguilingly beautiful voice and a mature sense of phrasing well beyond her years”

—Rounders Roundup/2006

“Be they polkas, jigs, strathspeys, or songs old and new, the band’s performance ranges from spirited and uplifting to refined and subtle—but then you’d expect little else from Cape Breton players who, once bitten by the musical bug, live, eat, drink, and dream music!”

—Arthur Wood, Birmingham, England/2006

“Accomplished musicians all, of course, spinning a tale of love and loss as adeptly as they lead the dance with a set of reels. But the otherworldly vocals of Fiona MacGillivray—her expressive voice belies her tender age! Sure, new teenage sensations come and go regularly in pop music, but MacGillivray’s is a voice for the ages, and a rare treat—even on Cape Breton.”

—Allan Wigney, Sun Media/2006

“The quartet from Cape Breton entertained the crowd with two sizzling sets of Celtic-infused singing, playing and dancing, on original compositions and traditional pieces that reflected their province’s rich musical heritage.”

— The Post-Star, NY

“The material ranges from traditional balladry to Tom Waits songs, with performances that combine youthful exuberance and a mature virtuosity. Though the instrumental numbers keep the dance floor filled, the lush, supple vocals of Fiona MacGillivray give the music its emotional depth and resonance.”

—Don McLeese, Amazon/2006