

Randal Bays - biography

"A commanding presence on the fiddle." - The Irish Times

"His playing has power and passion... simply a joy to listen to." - Dirty Linen Magazine

Randal Bays is a self-taught US-born musician who's been playing Irish fiddle for more than thirty years; he's now widely recognized as a master of that complex, ancient art, in particular the traditional styles of Co. Clare and Co. Galway. He's **"among the best Irish style fiddlers of his generation", according to Fiddler Magazine**. Randal has toured and recorded with many of the great Irish musicians of the day, including James Keane and Daithi Sproule (in the band FINGAL), James Kelly, Martin Hayes, Michéal O'Domhnaill and many more. He also has a string of great independent recordings to his credit, including his live CD "House to House" (with Roger Landes), which was picked by the Irish Times as one of the **"top five traditional recordings of 2005"**.

Randal Bays is also famed as a fingerstyle guitarist, having recorded two seminal albums with Irish fiddler Martin Hayes, also with contributions to the "Masters of the Irish Guitar" CD on Shanachie Records. Randal recently released his first album of solo guitar work, "Oyster Light".

Randal has performed all over the US, Europe and Canada, and is in great demand as a teacher of Irish fiddle. He co-founded and serves as **Artistic Director of the Friday Harbor Irish Music Week**, which takes place every March in the San Juan Islands off the coast of Washington state. The week is now in its tenth year and has been a major influence on musicians throughout North America for its emphasis on tradition and community, as well as the high level of instruction.

Selected Performances:

Catskills Irish Arts Week – East Durham, NY
San Francisco Celtic Music and Arts Festival – San Francisco, CA
Willie Clancy Festival and Summer School – Co. Clare, Ireland
Festival des Musiques-Vivantes – Ris-Orangis, France
Chicago Celtic Festival – Chicago, IL
Gaelic Roots Festival – Boston, MA
Lotus Fest World Music Festival – Bloomington, IN
Augusta Heritage Week – Elkins, WV
Winnipeg Irish Festival – Winnipeg, MB
Austin Celtic Fest – Austin TX
Chicago Celtic Heritage Festival – Chicago IL
Milwaukee Irish Fest – Milwaukee WI
Rocky Mountain Fiddle Camp – Colorado
Young Irish Musicians Weekend – St. Paul MN
O'Flaherty Irish Music Retreat – Dallas TX
Zoukfest Music Festival – Taos NM
Friday Harbor Irish Music Week – Friday Harbor WA