

# SARAH McQUAID

DAVID HENNESSY

**F**resh from touring Holland and Germany, Sarah McQuaid will kick off a UK tour with a gig at The Blue Anchor Inn, Cornwall on April 4. Born in Spain, raised in Chicago, Sarah spent 13 years in Ireland and is now based in Cornwall. Her sound reflects the eclectic mix of her life. Her third album, *The Plum Tree and the Rose* was very warmly received on both sides of the Atlantic making it to No. 3 on the Folk-DJ Chart, No. 5 on the Euro Americana Chart and No. 6 on the Roots Music Report Folk Top 50.

"I'm delighted," the singer/songwriter tells *The Irish World*. "It was fantastic to see that level of reaction. I wrote nine of the tracks on this album whereas on my first album I had one original and on my second album, I had two originals so that's a big leap. I didn't know what the reaction would be to that frankly but I was really happy. The reviews spoke very highly about my song writing so that was very encouraging and meant that I am going to continue in that direction for the next album."

It was in Ireland that Sarah's career took off. After moving to Dublin in 1994, Sarah worked as a music journalist and became active in the thriving scene which led to her 1997 debut *When Two Lovers Meet* and *I Won't Go Home 'Til Morning*: "I don't know whether I would be doing

what I'm doing now if I hadn't (moved to Ireland). The move from the US to Ireland was pivotal in me doing my first album and then my move to Cornwall was important in getting more on an international touring level.

***I wouldn't be doing what I am doing now if not for Ireland***

"The nice thing about moving to Ireland is that because it's such a small country and everybody knows everybody, once you meet a couple of people you get to know a lot of people. Within quite a short time of living in Dublin, I had got to know people like Gerry O'Beirne and Donal Lunny and a lot of people who were quite important players in the music scene and then Gerry wound up producing all three of my albums.

"All my albums were recorded in Ireland because I found a lovely place to record: Trevor Hutchinson (of Lunasa, The Waterboys)'s studio. Trevor also plays on all of them. Most of the players on the new album also played on previous albums: Máire Breatnach, Liam Bradley, Niamh Parsons: A lot of constants there that have lasted a

long time because my first album was recorded way back in 1996 and then the third album just came out last year and that's quite a spread of years to still be working with the same people.

"I do (love Ireland, I go back at least once every year for a tour and hopefully more often to visit family."

Sarah mentions the acclaim her song writing has been getting the release of her last album and has already started collecting ideas for the next one. Another thing she is noted for is how she interacts with the crowd, something she really enjoys: "I love it. For me, there's a real thrill to live performing. What I tend to do when I get up on stage is start chatting to the audience straight away before I even sing to get a feel for what they're like and if I can start getting laughs and talk back straight away, I know it's going to be a great night.

"Here, in Holland and Germany, I was trying to speak a little bit of the lan-

guage. Somebody I was playing with told me what the Dutch was for 'I slept like a log' and I got up on stage that night and the first thing I said was: 'Hey,

I'm learning a bit of Dutch, I learned how to say I slept like a log', and that doesn't sound that funny now but it got this huge

response, laughter and applause, and you've got them on your side for the evening."

As well as her solo gigs that can be seen around the UK until September, Sarah can also be caught live at some of this summer's festivals: "I've just had some festival gigs come in for the summer that I'm very happy about. I'm going to be playing at Sidmouth (Folk Week) in August which will be great and I'm playing at Festival on the Edge in July as well as a local festival in Penzance."

Sarah plays the Blue Anchor Inn in Cornwall on April 4, An Creagán in Omagh on April 19, The Playhouse Theatre & Arts Centre in Derry on April 20, Edinburgh Folk Club on May 1 with many more UK gigs over May, June and September. For more information, go to: [www.sarahmcquaid.com/](http://www.sarahmcquaid.com/).



Sarah McQuaid

## C2C: Country to Country festival 2013



Tim McGraw on stage

THOUSANDS OF Country and Western fans flocked to the C2C: Country to Country festival at London's O2 on St Patrick's weekend.

Among the leading US country music acts who took to the stage over the two nights were Tim McGraw and Carrie Underwood. Carrie has sold 15 million albums worldwide and has five Grammy Awards to her name. Among the other top flight performers who swapped Nashville for Greenwich for the week-end made it to were Vince Gill, Darius Rucker, Little Big Town, Brantley Gilbert, Kristian Bush, and LeAnn Rimes.

The promoters were so pleased with the results that within days they put on sale tickets for next year's repeat engagement, C2C 2014, to be held at the same venue on March 15 and 16

Photos: Lucia Butler



L to R Darius Rucker, LeAnn Rimes, Carrie Underwood, Brantley Gilbert,

Easter Special with AMAZING APPLES!

AFTER THE fantastic launch of 'THE CLADDAGH RING LIVE' with Big Generator & Ocean Colour Scene, The Claddagh Ring continues to deliver top quality live music this Easter weekend in the shape of the Amazing Apples!

All the way from Galway, the Apples will perform live at The Quays this Friday & live at The Claddagh Ring on Saturday. Tickets are available from [eventim.co.uk](http://eventim.co.uk) & [viewlondon.co.uk](http://viewlondon.co.uk). Late opening all weekend, check out Facebook for the weekends full listings!