



THE CHIEFTAINS REKINDLE GRAMMY-WINNING PARTNERSHIP WITH RY COODER FOR 'SAN PATRICIO' (MARCH 9/FANTASY RECORDS/CONCORD MUSIC GROUP), ILLUMINATING MUSICAL AND HISTORICAL BONDS BETWEEN IRELAND AND MEXICO

ALBUM BY WORLD'S MOST CELEBRATED IRISH MUSIC GROUP REVISITS LEGEND OF THE SAN PATRICIO BATTALION, UNSUNG HEROES OF THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR, WITH GUEST APPEARANCES BY LINDA RONSTADT, LIAM NEESON, VAN DYKE PARKS, LILA DOWNS, LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE, CARLOS NUNEZ AND MANY OTHERS

The musical souls of two nations, Ireland and Mexico, are movingly brought to life in 'San Patricio,' the latest international collaboration by six-time Grammy winners the Chieftains – the leading practitioners of Irish traditional music for the past four decades. The album features multi-instrumentalist, singer and composer Ry Cooder, another multiple-Grammy winner, who co-produced with the Chieftains' Paddy Moloney.

In addition to Cooder, who contributes an original song, 'San Patricio' showcases a brilliant roster of Irish, Mexican and American guest artists including Linda Ronstadt, actor Liam Neeson, Los Tigres del Norte, legendary 92-year-old Mexican ranchero singer Chavela Vargas, Van Dyke Parks, and Lila Downs, among many others. It will be released March 9 on Fantasy Records/Concord Music Group.

One of the Chieftains' most unique projects in their long history, 'San Patricio' (the Spanish name for St. Patrick) tells the nearly forgotten story of the brave San Patricio battalion – a downtrodden group of Irish immigrant conscripts who deserted the U.S. Army in 1846 to fight on the Mexican side against the invading Yankees in the Mexican-American War (1846-1848).

Although the members of the San Patricio Battalion were reviled as traitors and deserters in the U.S., Chieftains' founder and frontman Paddy Moloney says, "the men of the San Patricio Battalion are remembered by generations of Mexicans to this day as heroes who fought bravely against an unjust and thinly veiled war of aggression." 'San Patricio' brings their story to life through heart-stirring ballads and effervescent dance songs from both countries, including traditional "sones" that the San Patricios might have heard while in Mexico, and Irish airs and reels that evoke the homeland they left behind.

The Chieftains previously collaborated on a song with Ry Cooder on the breakthrough 1995 album, 'The Long Black Veil,' a Grammy winner for Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals, which also featured their first pairings with pop/rock superstars Mick Jagger, Van Morrison, Sting, Sinead O'Connor and the Rolling Stones. The Chieftains featured Cooder and came together again for the Grammy-winning 1997 album, 'Santiago.'

Cooder sings the legend of the San Patricios in the moving ballad "The Sands of Mexico," which he wrote for this album. Acclaimed Irish actor Liam Neeson narrates the San Patricios' sacrifice on behalf of Mexico in the heart-stirring military anthem "March to Battle," composed by Moloney, with lyrics by Irish novelist/songwriter Brendan Graham, best known for his song "You Raise Me Up." "March to Battle" includes the verses:

*We are the San Patricios, a brave and gallant band
There'll be no white flag flying within this green command
We are the San Patricios, we have but one demand,
To see the Yankees safely home across the Rio Grande...*

*We've disappeared from history like footprints in the sand
But our song is in the tumbleweeds and our love is in this land
But if in the desert moonlight you see a ghostly band
We are the men who died for freedom across the Rio Grande*

The blending of Mexican and Irish musical styles and instruments produces music of surprising depth and beauty. The album includes canciones rancheras, boleros, norteño music, and other traditional regional music of Mexico; as well as Irish music and other traditional forms. They are played on a dazzling array of instruments – Mexican guitars, button accordion, bajo sexto, trumpets, double bass and drums; and on the Irish side, Moloney's haunting Uilleann pipes and tin whistle, bodhrán, and flute. Fiddle and harp, heard throughout, are common to both musical traditions.

Six-time Grammy winners The Chieftains are the most celebrated Irish traditional music group in the world. The group includes founder and leader Paddy Moloney (Uilleann pipes, tin whistle), Matt Molloy (flute), Sean Keane (fiddle) and Kevin Conneff (bodhrán, vocals). Over the years, they have collaborated with some of the biggest names in rock, pop and traditional music including: Sting, James Galway, Linda Ronstadt, Elvis Costello, Van Morrison, Sinead O'Connor, Joni Mitchell, Diana Krall, Art Garfunkel, the Rolling Stones, Ricky Scaggs, Los Lobos, Del McCoury, Lyle Lovett, Chet Atkins and Emmylou Harris.

Six-time Grammy winner Ry Cooder has been a brilliant session musician, solo artist, record producer and film composer over the course of a 40-year career. His past triumphs included the 'Buena Vista Social Club,' the biggest-selling world music album ever (more than eight million records), which led to a worldwide revival of interest in Cuban music. His most recent release was 'I, Flathead' (Nonesuch/Perro Verde), an album of music by the fictional musician Kash Buk and his band the Klowns, characters in a 95-page Cooder novella that was released simultaneously with the album.

For more information on San Patricio, please contact Brendan Gilmartin (bgilmartin@shorefire.com) or Matt Hanks (mhanks@shorefire.com) at Shore Fire Media, 718-522-7171.

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