

Jamie O'Brien - bio

It was in 1990, soon after his arrival from Europe, that Jamie O'Brien first gained attention on this side of the Atlantic: as guitarist with Medicinal Purpose, the Pennsylvania-based old timey band. With this group, he helped lead the current revival in contradancing and old timey music in South Central Pa. At the same time, he also continued to develop his career in Irish music, initially in the Philadelphia area.

Coming from a London-Irish family, he was introduced to Irish music at a young age. His earliest recollections are of family gatherings at which songs were sung, dances danced and stories told. Although he has performed in a number of styles over the years, he has always enjoyed returning to his Irish roots.

He performed throughout the British Isles and Europe -- he still tours Germany and France frequently -- and since arriving in the US has played across the Mid-Atlantic region and at top venues from Chicago to Washington, DC, to the Hawaiian Islands, appearing at festivals large and small, concerts, house concerts, clubs, coffee houses dances and pubs. He has established a reputation as a fine singer and inventive accompanist.

As a solo singer and guitarist, he presents his own individual approach to songs old and new: tradition with a contemporary touch. He is often accompanied by fiddle, concertina, mandolin and/or percussion.

For many years, he has been a highly sought-after accompanist among Irish and Celtic musicians -- he has played with such performers as Aoife Clancy (vocals, guitar, bodhrán), Jim Eagan (fiddle), Ken Kolodner (hammered dulcimer, fiddle) and Mary Staunton (vocals, accordion) among others -- and has sat in with such bands as the Brennans, Last Night's Fun, Fieldstone, Round the House and more.

As well as performing solo, Jamie plays regularly with: Fánaí, the noted traditional Irish band based in Alaska; with the Laune Rangers, central PA's foremost Irish band; and Shades of Green & Blue, a group that explores musical connections between the Old World and the New. After more than a dozen years, he can still be found playing guitar for Medicinal Purpose. He is also co-founder and co-originator of "Celtic Aloha", a group of international musicians who bring together the songs, tunes, dances and stories of their islands: Hawaii and the British Isles.

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for more information on Jamie and his projects and for bookings, contact:

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