

## James Kelly Short Bio

James Kelly, a native of Ireland, is one of the greatest Irish traditional fiddlers alive today. He learned his music from his father John Kelly, the renowned fiddle and concertina player from County Clare. After years of careful study and practice, James began his recording and touring career at age sixteen. That year he won first place in the prestigious "Fiddler of the Year" competition and recorded his first album, a duet with his brother John. Since that time, James has toured Europe, the US, Canada and South America, and was a member of several influential Irish groups, including "Patrick Street" and the legendary folk group "Planxty." He was a presenter of the "Pure Drop" series for Irish TV and has appeared several times with the Grammy award winning Irish group, "The Chieftains." In the US, James has performed several times on Garrison Keillor's national radio show, "A Prairie Home Companion." In recent years he received the prestigious "Florida Folk Heritage Award" as well as the "Florida Individual Artist Fellowship in Folk Arts Award." James is currently the TG4 Irish traditional musician of the year, having been awarded the "Gradam Ceoil TG4 2006 Irish Musician of the Year" award in recognition of his outstanding musicianship and contributions to Irish music (TG4 is Ireland's Irish-language TV station). He has 18 albums to his credit and recently released his latest recording, "Melodic Journeys." He is currently working on a teaching DVD for fiddle students, as well as compiling his over 800 compositions for publication. He continues to tour with some of Irish music's leading accompanists.

"James is one of the most outstanding Irish musicians of this or any generation." --Dr. Mick Moloney, Musician and Folklorist, New York University

"As a virtuoso violinist and exponent of Irish Traditional Music, James ranks among the very best in Ireland today." --Tony MacMahon, Senior Producer, Radio Telefis Eireann

"James Kelly is widely recognized as one of Ireland's leading traditional fiddle players." -  
-Dermot McLaughlin, Traditional Music Officer, Irish Arts Council