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Theater-Lover Agnew Prepares for Historic Celtic Woman DVD Recording

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Celtic Woman: (left to right) Mairead Nesbitt, Lisa Lambe, Lisa Kelly, Chloe Agnew. Photo by Lili Forberg

While the international success of pop-stardom could jade anyone, the women in Celtic Woman have taken their success in stride and feel truly humbled by it. Because of their down-to-earth charisma, genuine warmth and openness both on stage and off, fans have endeared themselves to this group.

What started out as a one-time event has grown into a world-wide phenomenon, and for 21-year-old Chloe Agnew, the youngest of the original members of Celtic Woman, the thrill of performing still stays fresh and exhilarating. While she prepares for the new DVD and Public Television recording at Atlanta's Fox Theatre, she admits she is nervous but excited to be coming to the city for this new project.

"The Fox Theatre in Atlanta is without a doubt one of the most amazing places to perform. There's no more beautiful of a place than the Fox," she comments. "It is definitely one of our top five venues."

This performance and recording will be an appreciation gift for all of the fans in America. "We are amazed at the strength of the fan base in the U.S. So many fans traveled to Ireland, and we wanted to give back to our fans in America," she comments. "It has been wonderful to see the amount of tweets and Facebook posts saying how fans are delighted about us recording in the U.S."

As with the other members of the group, Agnew is grateful and appreciative of their audience. When asked which songs she loves to perform live, she first mentions, smiling through her voice, Josh Groban's "You Raise Me Up." It's a song that she never tires of because she sees "how many people it touches. It is a special song for everyone, not just me." Of all the songs she performs, Billy Joel's "Goodnight My Angel" holds the most personal connection for her since it was a song her mother use to sing to her before bed.

Her mother, in particular, has had a tremendous influence on Agnew and her career. Born to performing artists (her father, David Agnew, a classical musician and her mother, Adele "Twink" King, an actress), she has developed not only unique formative experiences, but also eclectic musical tastes.

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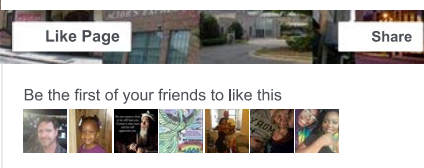
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"I grew up in a musical household and developed a love for so many different types of music," she says. "I have such eclectic taste from Green Day to Dolly Parton. There is such good music out there," she comments. In fact, if you were to peek at her iPod, you would see everything from classical and Broadway showtunes to current country and pop chart-toppers. She jokes with an infectious laugh, "If I was at a party and they were asking for someone's iPod, I would never offer up mine."

While some of her musical tastes have found their way into Celtic Woman performances, perhaps, it was her years following her mother's footsteps and being on stage that had the most formative influence on her. Known as the Queen of Pantomime, her mother performed a Christmas show at the Olympia Theatre in Dublin. For a few years, Agnew also pantomimed in the show. Here, she learned the rigors of being on stage.

"Doing eight shows a week builds up that stamina, and it served me well," she comments. "I am very grateful for those years." Those performances have helped her as she has worked with Celtic Woman and its grueling concert schedule that includes traveling as well as five to six shows per week.

Those same influences also helped her to become a self-declared theater lover. Although she loves *Wicked* and *The Lion King*, *Jersey Boys* captivates her the most. "I absolutely love it. It is a wonderful telling of a great story with feel good music you can sing along and tap your foot to, and you leave the theater feeling good." She loves the show so much that she took her sister to see it recently while performing in Minneapolis since it was showing at a theater next to where they were playing.

Her love of theater doesn't end in the audience; she would one day love to be on stage either on Broadway or the West End. When asked about it, she declares excitedly, "I am waiting for someone to give me my big break on Broadway. It would be a dream come true. I would play anything even an ogre in the background."

Despite that desire, she enjoys performing with Celtic Woman who have become like a family to her. Since joining the group at age 15, she has practically grown up with the group. "It has changed me as a performer and a person as well," she states. When she started touring, she had "never done anything like touring, and it's difficult to travel from place to place. I'm lucky to be surrounded by a wonderful group of people."

Being on the road for eight to ten months a year could unnerve anyone, but Celtic Woman has stayed grounded. Unlike other prominent vocal groups in music history, these ladies actually do get along. There are no "*Desperate Housewives* stories" to tell. "We are so respectful and have a lot of admiration for each other," Agnew says. "Touring is not easy, and you get quite homesick. It is important to be there as friends for one another."

That friendship is apparent to the audience, and for many who love the group, this aspect bolsters their enjoyment of the music. This fact isn't lost on the group members and one that makes them quite proud. Likewise, Agnew feels a sense of pride that, as female artists in a country that has exported male groups like U2, Celtic Woman is representing Ireland and Irish musical history.

It has been almost two years since the last Celtic Woman DVD, *Celtic Woman: Songs from the Heart*, was released, and the wait will soon end. "It will definitely be worth the wait," she mentions. "Coming to the Fox in Atlanta is exciting for us, and we are hoping the people in Atlanta will come out. We are pulling out all the stops to make this the best show yet."

The night promises to be one where we can "forget troubles and have a bit of fun." Many surprises are promised for this event, including the set list. While she can't divulge what will be performed, she does say that, "every song will be brand new, and it's an exciting set list with songs some people would never expect Celtic Woman to do." One hint she did tease with is that they will perform "a piece of music that theater-goers will be happy with."

Chloe Agnew (center) performs with the other members of Celtic Woman. Photo by Ted Roth

Celtic Woman records their new DVD and Public Television special at Atlanta’s Fabulous Fox Theatre on September 6 and 7. Everyone is invited to be a part of this historic event. Tickets are available at the Fox Theatre box office, all Ticketmaster outlets and online at www.ticketmaster.com. For more information about the event [click here](#).

By Kenny Norton



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