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## Ixtlan Artists Newsletter

August 2008

Issue 5

### In This Issue:

- [News](#)
- [Review](#)
- [Ideas and Programs](#)
- [Featured Artist](#)
- [Booking Now](#)

### **Ixtlan Artists Group** *Virtuoso Performers – A Commitment to Education and Diversity*

For more than twenty years The [Ixtlan Artists Group](#) has represented virtuoso performers from Europe and the Americas who have a commitment to education and cultural diversity. Founded in 1986 under the name "Joan Sherman Artist Management," the agency's original mission of providing excellent folk artists has expanded to traditional world music artists who provide concert and educational experiences that open doorways to universal cultural understanding.

Each artist Ixtlan represents is a premiere talent in their genre, and they take

## News

### Shaking hands with a song- the art of a peaceful world



*Tao Seeger, Tommy Sands,  
Geoffrey Donaldson and Gerry Adams  
singing "Where have all the flowers gone?"  
in Northern Ireland at the tribute to  
Pete Seeger on July 24, 2008.*

Can a song create change? "If there is a world here at the end of the 21st Century, one of the main reasons will be that songwriters and musicians around the world have decided to be more than mere entertainers." So wrote Pete Seeger for the sleeve of the Tommy Sands CD *The Heart's A Wonder*. The first song on that recording, "The Music of Healing", was co-written by Tommy and Pete.

It's final verse:

Somehow this cycle of vengeance keeps turnin'  
Until each other's sorrows and songs we start learnin'  
Peace is the prize for those who are daring  
Sing me the music of healing  
Time is your friend it cures all your sorrows  
But how can I wait till another tomorrow  
One step today and a thousand will follow  
Sing me the music of healing

For those who are daring, indeed. Soon after the 1995 release of the recording, Tommy and Mary McAleese (current President of Ireland) met to hatch a new idea born of the song. They sought a venue for expression of opposing viewpoints in Northern Ireland, an event called "The Music of Healing." Musicians from both

audiences beyond daily experience into the arena of performance virtuosity rich in cultural traditions. Our artists speak directly, not only to performance, but to making an impact, on and off the stage.

Through both stage performance and educational outreach, Ixtlan endeavors to provide a venue where performance is used as a bridge to cultural understanding, artistic awareness, educational involvement, and peaceful coexistence of shared ideas.

Call Ixtlan Toll Free:  
800-961-9601

[www.ixtlanartists.com](http://www.ixtlanartists.com)

### Our Roster



[AcustiCon](#)



[Boys of the Lough](#)



[Brave Old World](#)



[Harmonia](#)

factions in Northern Ireland - Catholic and Protestant - met to play music together, to test and prove the bonding power of their shared music, to start learnin' each other's sorrows and songs. Later, the musicians brought leaders from their parties with them; they would open these discussion sessions with music, "to create an atmosphere of neighborliness and humanity." The discussions were often heated, but never dissolved. The Citizen's Assembly which, in 1996, began to hold its "consensus sessions," grew out of these musical exchanges. *The Music of Healing* was the anthem sung by all. The Citizen's Assembly looked for new ways of solving conflict and new ways of decision making - moving from "majoritarianism" to a consensus approach. It was this Citizen's Assembly which was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the Good Friday Peace Accords, which remain a source of hope for lasting peace in Ireland despite continuing problems.

"We did it because politicians had difficulty in meeting," says Tommy. "We used music to create an atmosphere of humanity; to generate an atmosphere for politicians who normally couldn't talk to each other at all, to come together." And it worked. Sinn Fein party members and members of the Democratic Unionist Party, the oppositional political parties in Ireland, began a trend of positive interaction. "The Music of Healing" continues as an annual political seminar where voice and instrument create a platform for the progress of peace.

Last month, music was again shown to be a powerful instrument to bridge differences. At the 2008 Creative Arts Award (a Lifetime Achievement Award for Artists in Ireland) many pivotal Irish figures gathered to pay tribute to this year's honoree, Pete Seeger. Among the attendees, pictured above with Pete's grandson Tao Seeger and Tommy Sands, were Geoffrey Donaldson of the DUP and Gerry Adams, President of Sinn Fein, who represent the opposite extremes of the Northern Ireland divide. Tommy explains, "For these two men, with such differing ideals, it is politically impossible to share a handshake in public. Yet, they are there together, singing *Where have all the flowers gone?* with Tao and myself". The event aired on the 6 o'clock news in Ireland. "It sent an important message," continues Tommy. "Things can be much better, when those from two extremes can sing together a song about peace."

Commenting at this event about the songwriter's ability to instigate change, Poet Laureate Seamus Heaney said of Pete Seeger "His art managed to take the strain of his activism, the banjo in his hand was his hammer of justice, and his music was more than equal to the music of what happened." Of Tommy Sands, Heaney says, "You can trust the singer as well as the song." Tommy's work in Ireland, and around the world, continues. Powerful songs stir people to move forward. "Music is itself, like a hand or a fist," says Sands. With every composition, artists have a choice. "You can shake a hand, or make a fist."

**Conferences and Showcases:** At the Arts Northwest Conference Showcase, Tommy Sands will be playing music from his new CD, *Let the Circle Be Wide*, along with Moya and Fionan Sands, and Kevin Locke will be playing music from *Earth Gift*, along with singer Doug Good Feather. Ixtlan Artists Group will be representing Kevin Locke, The Kevin Locke Native Dance Ensemble, Tommy Sands, Boys of the Lough, Beppe Gambetta, AcustiCon, Peter Ostroushko and the Heartland Band, Brave Old World, and other artists at the following FALL CONFERENCES:

**Arts Midwest:** September 18-20, 2008...BOOTH 611

**PAE/Southern Arts:** Sept 25-27, 2008...BOOTH 423

**Arts Northwest:** October 14-16, 2008...BOOTH C24

Several new programs are offered this season by existing artists, and Ixtlan will be presenting new artists (see Featured Artist section, below)



[Beppe Gambetta](#)



[Guy Klucevsek & Alan Bern](#)



[Kusum Gbo](#)



[Babatunde Lea](#)



[Llan de Cubel](#)



[Kevin Locke](#)



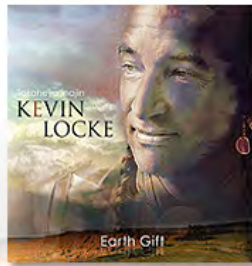
[KL Native Dance Ensemble](#)



[Peter Ostroushko  
& the Heartland Band](#)

## Review

### Kevin Locke's *Earth Gift*



*“Everything is brought  
into the Earth by song.”*

- Kevin Locke

***Earth Gift***, Kevin Locke's new CD, is a hauntingly beautiful recording that echoes the rhythms of the earth, the elements and the animals. Each song is part of the larger whole, a ritual calling forth the Divine energy that is the object of the prayer.

The CD is a selection of songs of the Plains and Woodlands Indians. Producer Tom Wasinger, a previous winner of two Grammy Awards, entered the studio hoping to achieve a harmonious balance of past and present. He succeeded by creating contemporary arrangements of ancient native flute, singing and drumming. Blending Kevin's flute and voice with the voices and drumming of Doug Good Feather and Gracie RedShirt Tyon, Wasinger then backed the arrangements with world instruments such as the udu, zither, cimbalom and resonating stones, to name a few. The result promises to be a breakthrough recording that honors these songs of a bygone time and makes them accessible for today.

Demonstration copies of ***Earth Gift*** are now available to presenting organizations. Call 800-961-9601. The recording's official release date is September 15, 2008. It will be available on CD-Baby.

Released in time for the Grammy nominations, ***Earth Gift*** will compete with other entries in the Native American music category. More than 150 experts in various related fields review entries to ensure the placement category is correct before the voting takes place. Because the Native American category makes no distinction between traditional and contemporary categories, the recording's mix of old Lakota songs set within a new world music context will be an alluring entry. Produced with state-of-the-art studio elements while using 20,000 year-old drumming techniques, the recording will be heard with interest by the Grammy voters. We look forward to seeing ***Earth Gift*** among the nominated recordings eligible for Grammy voting on December 4, 2008.

## Ideas and Programs

### Soul of the Gypsy



[Sally Rogers](#)



[Tommy Moya  
& Fionán Sands](#)



It's in the culture of Gorbachev, Sakharov, and Stravinsky, and it's deeply embedded in the folk music that flows through Eastern Europe from the Danube to the Carpathians. Harmonia brings it to the classroom. It's the soul of the gypsy.

Widely known for their virtuosity and technical brilliance, Harmonia delivers the fun, depth, and fire of Eastern European music as well as insight into the region's culture in their interactive program. The program, "Soul of the Gypsy", creates a space for students and participants to discuss Eastern European song, instruments, geography, and culture, accompanied by a demonstration of various styles and types of music. "Soul of the Gypsy" has been tailored to coordinate with social studies units, history units and in multi-cultural fairs. It's also been a successful enrichment program for students participating in instrumental and vocal music programs. Folk flute demonstrations are particularly interesting to schools with elementary recorder/song flute programs.

Ixtlan knows that to really learn, you have to be really involved. "Soul of the Gypsy" is designed to engage children and older students in learning. Students participate in traditional Eastern European singing and dance with instruction from the six masterful musicians and educators who come together as Harmonia. "Soul of the Gypsy" is also available as an advanced program for universities and museum showcases.

For more information, please visit [Harmonia's](#) page and download their press kit.

## Featured Artist

### Beppe Gambetta



Ixtlan is proud to announce an Italian addition to our Artist Roster: Genova-native Beppe Gambetta. Beppe's reputation in the United States and Canada has been realized by participation in prestigious festivals like the Walnut Valley Festival in Kansas, Merlefest in North Carolina, Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas and Canadian Folk Festivals in Winnipeg and Edmonton, as well as events like national radio shows "All Things Considered" and "E-Town". Beppe's cool acoustic style has filled performing arts halls from the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Tennessee to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. He's performed with David Grisman, Doc

Watson, Norman Blake, Gene Parsons, Bela Fleck and more. In a world dominated by the trends and logic of the market, Gambetta's playing and singing stand out for their intimate emotions, communication, research in tone, sobriety and humor. An inspired music that modestly avoids relying solely on his high level of technical excellence, it reveals the innermost feelings of a brilliant, playful mind that is always exploring and innovating while staying firmly routed in tradition.

For more information, please visit [Beppe's](#) site.



*Booking Now...*

#### Boys of the Lough

The [Celtic Christmas Tour](#) runs from Thanksgiving weekend to December 21, 2008. The Spring Tour runs from February 25 to March 25, 2009. Call now for remaining dates on these two tours. Ixtlan will soon begin booking [Boys of the Lough](#) tours in Summer & Fall of 2009, and Spring of 2010.

**For Info call:** Aaron Kern at 412-521-2930

#### Peter Ostroushko

[Christmas in the Heartland](#) is being booked now. Picked up on over 50 NPR radio stations nationally within a year of its debut, this holiday show combines family appeal, brilliant musicianship, and a familiar atmosphere of holiday cheer audiences love. Bookings for Peter's DUO concerts occur year-round, please call for dates in your area. [Peter Ostroushko and the Heartland Band](#), available for larger concert halls, tours at select times throughout the year, please call for details.

**For Info call:** Mike Torti at 412-521-2960

#### The Kevin Locke Native Dance Ensemble

Visually compelling and musically powerful, [The Drum is the Thunder, the Flute is the Wind](#) is a sensational journey in Native American symbolism and aesthetics. Embracing Native American arts through six authentic ritual dances, storytelling and a unique presentation of musical skill, this program has openings in October and November 2008, and January/April 2009. New "NEFA Grant" dance theater program available Fall 2009.

**For Info call:** Robin Troup at 412-521-4201

#### Tommy Sands

Enchanting. Irresistible. Charming. Three words out of many that describe Ireland's legendary County Down performer. [Tommy](#) tours with accomplished musicians 26-year-old Moya Sands (violin, bodhran, vocals) and 27-year-old Fionán Sands (mandolin, banjo) for the Fall 2008 *Let the Circle Be Wide*, CD release tour from September 26 to November 2, 2008.

**For Info call:** Robin Troup at 412-521-4201

Beppe Gambetta, Harmonia, Babatunde Lea, Sally Rogers, Thirza Defoe, AcoustiCon, Brave Old World, Kevin Locke

These artists tour year-round. Ask about available dates in your area. For more information please contact **Ixtlan Artists Group** at 412-521-4201 or click here:

[www.ixtlanartists.com](http://www.ixtlanartists.com)

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