

# Llan de Cubel

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**Ixtlan Artists Group, Inc.**

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# Llan de Cubel

## Overview

Llan de Cubel are masters of Celtic music from Spain who have created an awardwinning sound that, in the words of Steve Winnick of Dirty Linen Magazine, is “upbeat, bright and bouncy.”

Built upon the traditional music of Asturias, the Celtic region of northern Spain, this six-member Asturian ensemble’s exciting new sound comes largely from acoustic instruments which are indigenous to Asturias. Bagpipes, fiddle, wooden flute, Asturian and square drums supply the melody and percussion. Acoustic guitar and bouzouki provide the harmony and solid rhythm base which is so characteristic of the group. The electric instruments, bass pedal and keyboards, contribute the backing only in specific sections of certain tunes. Their primarily instrumental repertoire is punctuated by an occasional song.

Llan de Cubel’s repertoire stems mainly from the Asturian tradition of fiddle, flute, accordion and, above all, Asturian bagpipes (gaita) playing alboraes (dawn tunes), marches y pasucáis (marches), dances (such as saltones, muñeires, and polkas), and religious music (pipe mass). Inspiration for vocals comes from traditional Asturian songs: tonada, vaqueirae (rhythmic mountain songs), villancicos (carols) and sea songs, working songs, and drinking songs). Although they include some traditional lyrics, Llan de Cubel usually use contemporary texts which are set to music with traditional Asturian melodies.

# Llan de Cubel

## History

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The members of Llan de Cubel are traditional musicians who know and habitually play the most characteristic instruments of Asturias, and their interest in other traditions in Atlantic Europe has enriched their musical knowledge, especially the technical and harmonic aspects. Their award-winning music is based on material collected in the archives of Asturian ethnographic research groups, complemented by field work carried out by the members of the group themselves, and including the most popular tunes known by all Asturians.

Since their formation, Llan de Cubel has participated actively in the revitalization of traditional Asturian culture, focusing on the music and language. Their work as a pioneer group of Asturian folk is recognized in the renown publication *Historia de Asturias* in the section dedicated to the history of Asturian music. Today they are the most consolidated formation within the indigenous folk movement and as such an important reference point for new generations.

Llan de Cubel originated in the summer of 1984 as the result of the meeting of two groups of musicians in a festival: Uviéu, formed by Elias García and Fonsu Mielgo, a traditional duo of bagpipes and Asturian drum, with guitar player Susi Bello and percussionist Daniel Lombas, and Cuideiru, made up of fiddle player Guzmán Marqués and flute player Marcos Llope. The two groups decided to work together to create an Asturian folk ensemble named after a mountain in the county of Cuideiru: Llan de Cubel. There were only two established folk groups in Asturias at that time; both disappeared years ago.

Elias García, Fonsu Mielgo and Marcos Llope, members of the original line-up, are joined by Xel Pereda, Simon Bradley and Xuan Rodríguez in 1995, 1996 and 1997 respectively. Their first recording *Deva*, released in 1987, was a great success with the critics and commercially, and was considered Record of the Year by the President of the Government of the Principality of Asturias at that time, Pedro de Silva.

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Things got ever better with their second release *Na Llende* in 1990, for which they received the prestigious “Superventolín” prize for Best Folk Group awarded by the newspaper *La Nueva España* and Radio Nacional de España by popular vote. In mid 1992, the renown Scottish folk group The Tannahill Weavers included one of the tunes from *Na Llende* on their album *The Mermaid’s Song*.

The release of their third album *L’Otru Llau de la Mar* in December 1992, led to even greater success. It received three “Superventolín” awards: Best Folk Group, Best Production and Best Other Instrumentalist. With this, Llan de Cubel is the Asturian group awarded the most “Superventolín” prizes, even beating musical groups who are usually considered to be more commercial (pop, rock, jazz, etc.).

In 1993, Llan de Cubel won the prize for Best Folk Group of the Year awarded by Radio Nacional de España in Murcia, as a result of listeners’ votes. In December 1994, coinciding with the group’s 10th anniversary, the Sociedad General de Autores de España (Spanish Authors Society) awarded them an honorary Golden Disc for the work carried out in the field of folk music during the previous 10 years. This award was also acknowledged and supported by the Association of Asturian Writers.

In June 1995, they released *IV*, which is considered to be their best record to date, both in terms of quality and maturity of style. In the summer of 1995, during a tour to promote the record, Llan de Cubel was described as “the best folk group on the European scene,” by the organizers of the 40° Festival de la Zampogna in Scapoli, Italy. In October 1996, Llan de Cubel *IV* was among the Top 10 Folk Records of the Year on Lee Blackstone’s program, radio WMUA, Amherst, Massachusetts.

As a result of Llan de Cubel’s favorable reception and the success of their record *Llan de Cubel IV* in Great Britain, the Scottish label Iona Records released *IV* on a world-wide scale in 1997 and in the same year it was included among the best records of the year on several folk music programs on American and Canadian radio.

# Llan de Cubel

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In September 1998, they toured the United States with great success. The band had two more US tours in 1999. In December 1999, they released *Un Tiempu Meyor*. After the release and success of *Un Tiempu Meyor*, the Spanish National Radio chose the band to represent Spain in the Folk Festival of the European Broadcasting Union in Czech Republic in July 2000.

Today, several of Llan de Cubel's records are to be found among the most widely sold folk music records in Asturias. Because of their commitment to popularizing Asturian music, many leading bands and musicians of the folk music scene — The Tannahill Weavers, Capercaillie, Shooglenifty, Lunasa, Flook, Siné, Tony McManus, and Soig Siberil — play or have recorded tunes from Llan de Cubel's records.

Llan de Cubel are:

**Simon Bradley**, fiddle

**Xel Pereda**, acoustic guitar and vocals

**Elias Garcia**, bouzouki and bass pedal

**Marcos Llope**, flute and main vocals

**Fonsu Mielgo**, percussion, keyboards and vocals

**Xuan Rodriguez**, Asturian bagpipes

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# Llan de Cubel

## Discography

### Discography

*Un Tiempo Meyor*, Fonoastur FACD 8793, 2000

*Llan de Cubel IV*, FACD 8752, 1995

*L'Otru Llau de la Mar*, FACD 8734, 1992

*Na Llende*, FACD 8718, 1990

*Deva*, FACD 8701, 1987

### WITH OTHERS

*Naciones Celtas-Buscando el Norte*, Fonomusic, 1997

*Festival Interceltique de Lorient 25 ans*, Virgin, 1995

*Arpa Céltica*, SFA - 101, 1985

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# Llan de Cubel

## Reviews

“...unmistakably Celtic hell-for-leather dance tunes.”

**Sue Wilson**

“...it is a sound that pleases as much as it tantalizes.”

**John O'Regan**

“...swirling, highly-energized tunes, vibrant marches and gentler songs and ballads superbly played by an excellent six-piece folk band.”

**Kenny Mathieson**

“A critic wrote: 'Listening to Llan de Cubel is like letting the sunshine into the room'.”

**Tonder Festival**

“They're melodically compelling, rhythmically intense, and light in tone and texture. Theirs is a delicately-balanced sound, but they manage it beautifully. ...upbeat, bright and bouncy.”

**Steve Winick, Dirty Linen Magazine**

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# Llan de Cubel

## Appearances 1 of 3

### **NORTH AMERICA**

Potomac Festival, Virginia, June 2001

Seattle, Washington; Los Angeles-Pasadena, San Diego, Ojai, Oceanside, Chico, Sebastopol, Santa Cruz, Berkeley, California; Cincinnati, Ohio; Vancouver, British Columbia, September 2000

Chicago World Music Festival, Bloomington, Indiana; Boston, Massachusetts; Augusta, Maine; Bethlehem, Chesapeake, Pennsylvania; Charlottesville, Virginia Beach, Richmond, Virginia; Lake Eden, North Carolina; Wilmington, Delaware; New Orleans, Louisiana; Celtic Colours Festival, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, September-October 1999

USA Tour: Pasadena, Monterey, Winters, Chico, Ben Lomond, Arcata, Sebastopol, San Francisco Celtic Festival, California; Corvallis, Portland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington, February-March 1999

Mount Shasta, Chico, Sebastopol, Nevada City, Henflings, Santa Cruz, San José, Berkeley, California; Memphis, Tennessee; Saint Louis, Missouri, September 1998

### **EUROPE**

Celtic Connections, Glasgow, Scotland, January 2001, 1996 and 1995

Guinness Celtic Festival, Veysonnaz (Valais) Switzerland, August 2001

Dranouter Festival, Belgium, August 2001

Tour of Belgium & Holland: Brussels, Ingelmunster, Zwolle, Wijk an Zee, Zevenaar, Deventer, Zaandam, Vlissingen, Leeuwarden, Nieuwegein, January-February 2000

EBU (European Broadcasting Union) Annual Folk Festival, Roznov, Czech Republic, July 2000

Tour of Italy: Savona, Zola Predosa, Bologna; Cusano Milanino, Milano; Courmayeur, Val d'Aosta, Novara, July 2000

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## Appearances 2 of 3

Argentina Tour: Teatro Gran Rex, Buenos Aires; Teatro El Círculo, Rosario, October 2000

Tour of Sweden: Tidaholm, Skövde, Karlsborg, Grebbestad, Ulricehamn, Uddevalla, April 1999

Festival de la Música y la Cultura in Sta Fe de Bogotá, Colombia, August 1999

British Tour: Hampton Court, Moreton-on-Marsh, London, Cokermonth, Milton Keynes, England; Cnapan Festival: Ffostrasol, Wales; Celtic Hebridean Festival: Stornoway, Wick, Aberdeen, Lanark, Scotland, July 1998

Telemark Festivalen; Bo, Telemark, Norway, August 1998

XVII, XVIII, XX, XXIV and XXVIII Interceltic Festivals in Lorient, Brittany, France, 1998, 1994, 1990, 1988, and 1987

42° & 40° Mercato e Festival de la Zampogna, Scapoli, Italy, July 1997 and August 1995

Tour of Italy: Verona, Acqui Terme, Asti, Savigliano, July 1997

Tonder Festival, Denmark, August 1997

Estate Musicale, Republic of San Marino, September 1997

Live performance for BBC Radio 2, Glasgow, Scotland, January 1996

Live performances and specials for BBC Radio Scotland, Glasgow, January 1996, January 1995 and May 1994

Haapavesi Folk, Haapavesi, Finland, June 1996

Tour of Italy: Mondoví, Albenga, Turin, Vigonza, Fagagna, Venice, Monterosso, Imperia, Montalbana (Italian part of Switzerland), Sinio, Montegrotto Terme, July 1996

International Festival of Ramo Grande, Cidade Praia da Vitoria, Terceira, The Azores, November 1996

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Festival Folk, Garrevaques, Toulouse, France, July 1995

Tour of Scotland: Fort William (Ceolmhor Lochabair Celtic Music Festival), Glasgow (Mayfest), Aberdeen, Thurso, Dingwall, Ullapool, Edinburgh, May 1994

Festival International de Romans, Valence, France, July 1994

Rencontres Internationales de Saint Chartier, France, July 1994

Interceltic Festival, Gwengamp, Brittany, France, August 1994

Celebration of the "Day of Asturies" in Basle, Switzerland, September 1994

Tour of Italy: Trento, Romano d'Ezzelino, Padova, Cassale Monferrato (Folkermesse), Verzelli, Savona (Musica nei Castelli di Liguria), July 1993

III Interceltic Festival of Oporto, Portugal, April 1992

Recording for the Japanese television channel NHK included in a program on Asturies, Summer 1992

Expo '92, Seville, Spain, July-September 1992

Fêtes de la Mer, Saint Nazaire, Brittany, France, August 1988

**Llan de Cubel**, whose objective is the popularization of traditional Asturian music, have performed hundreds of concerts all over Asturies, participating both in cultural acts supported by the Government of the Principality and town councils, and in those organized by private bodies. They have also carried out this objective through their presence at the most important folk festivals in Spain (Madrid, Murcia, Segovia, Santander, Basque Country, Jerez, Canary Islands, Balearic Islands, Burgos, Salamanca, etc), and Galicia (Santiago, Ortigueira, A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense, etc).

# Llan de Cubel

## **ARTIST REPRESENTATION**

Llan de Cubel is represented in North America by Ixtlan Artists Group, Inc., an agency representing the very best in traditional, roots, ethnic and world music. Information, including press kits, is available at [www.IxtlanArtists.com](http://www.IxtlanArtists.com), or contact Robin Troup at [RTixtlanArtists@aol.com](mailto:RTixtlanArtists@aol.com) or 800.961-9601 toll free.

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### **KEITH SECOLA**

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### **SALLY ROGERS**

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