

Childsplay

The Parting Glass

A concert film of their farewell performance
Directed by James Rutenbeck and Maureen Foley



Childsplay is an unparalleled fiddle supergroup ranging from all-Ireland and National Scottish fiddle champions to Boston Symphony members, with all-star accompanists and amazing Irish step-dancing; throw in the exquisite singing of Karan Casey from Ireland and the wonderful voice of Aoife O'Donovan and you begin to get the picture of the uniqueness of Childsplay. Tying the instrumental voice of the band together is the extraordinary fact that each fiddle player in the band performs on a violin made by violinmaker Bob Childs. Like a family that sings together, there is a familial quality to the voices of all the violins made by the same maker that unites in a singular voice that is both beautiful and powerful. Directed

by James Rutenbeck and Maureen Foley and filmed by cinematographer Stephen McCarthy this concert film captures their farewell performance after 33 years of touring.

Childsplay has performed before hundreds of thousands of fiddle-music lovers over the years, recorded seven albums, in 2013 produced a widely viewed American Public TV documentary film and has inspired musicians around the world with its unique spirit and ensemble signature sound. All the musicians in the band have dedicated their lives to carrying on the musical traditions of Ireland and Scotland that moved to America's shores and have brought traditional music into the contemporary world through original compositions, syncopated rhythms and dynamic arrangements.

The film opens with Karan Casey singing *Sailing Off to Yankee Land*, a traditional song about Irish emigration beautifully arranged by Keith Murphy and then quickly moves into three driving sets of fiddle tunes that feature the incredible fiddling of Sheila Falls, Hanneke Cassel, Graham DeZarn and 9 other all-star fiddlers, along with the flute playing of Shannon Heaton and Mark Roberts. Irish Step-dancers Maureen Berry and Kevin Doyle are featured on the driving reel *Farewell to London*. Aoife O'Donovan then takes center stage to sing *Dante's Prayer*, a haunting ballad written by Loreena McKennitt and then, accompanied by Keith Murphy, a racing Americana song called *Sleepy Eyed John* written by Tex Atchinson. After several more sets of exciting fiddle tunes Karan Casey sings the beautiful ballad *Where Are You Tonight I Wonder* and caps the show with a duet with singer Aoife O'Donovan and the rest of Childsplay with the song *So Here's To You (A Parting Glass)*. This farewell film is the capstone to an impressive musical journey that honors the tremendous talent, creativity and community that is indeed Childsplay!