

Tim Moher leads St. Patrick's Day concert in Waterloo

By **Valerie Hill** Special to the Record
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WATERLOO - The new large ensemble concert series, First on Stage, at First United Church in Waterloo has inspired many local performers, including jazz musician, Tim Moher.

"I said 'if you're looking for anything, I can do a Celtic jazz concert,'" recalled Moher of his initial contact with series' organizers. "They asked if I'd be available for March 17."

March 17, St. Patrick's Day, how perfect for a jazz musician of Irish descent? Moher happens to be working on a new recording "Clefs of Moher," a clever play on words reflecting both the music and Ireland's most famous tourist attraction, the Cliffs of Moher.

First he agreed to do the concert, then there was that moment of slight panic: he needed more musicians. The whole idea of the First on Stage is to give opportunities to large ensembles. Moher needed to fill that stage and it was St. Patrick's Day.

"March 17, musicians are busy," said Moher. "I started working at it."

Luckily, through his connections, he was able to find the musicians he needed, including a Celtic harpist as well as a penny whistle and Irish uilleann pipes player. The uilleann is the Irish version of bagpipes but has a distinctly different sound. Moher even found two Irish dancers from Star Performance Academy in Waterloo.

This cobbled-together 12-piece ensemble will perform original music from Moher's upcoming album "Clefs of Moher" as well as several Irish favourites including a new arrangement of "Danny Boy."

Dan Kelly serves as master of ceremonies for this musical journey through Ireland featuring dance and poetry with a twist of jazz.

"We're working our way around Ireland," said Moher. "It's all my original songs.

"I was going to release my CD this year but decided to wait and write a few more songs."

Moher is a sax player, retired music educator, composer and recording artist, leader of TM Jazz and a member of Big Band Theory. He is also the founder of Belmont Village Festival, which will be held Sept. 14 this year.

The opportunity to bring a large group of musicians together was too tempting to pass up.

This new impromptu band consists of Celtic harpist and Irish singer, Shannon Kingsbury, Tim Moher on sax, Paul Stouffer on keys, Greg Prior on bass, Jesse Grandmont on fiddle, Tony Snyder on French horn, Cathy Anderson on cello, Andy Macpherson on drums, David

Cheon on guitar, Rob Gellner on trumpet, Don McDougall on percussion and Paul Gribbons on uilleann pipes and penny whistle.

With a mixture of musicians, dancers and poetry reading, the concert will be "a really nice mixture," said Moher. "More like a talent show." A talent show with a decidedly Irish twist.