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BATTLEFIELD BAND BUGLE

Forward with Scotland's Past

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Battlefield Band — a powerful performance

'First Class' Washington Post Review

BATTLEFIELD BAND at WOLFTRAP, VIENNA VA, 8th Nov 2006

Even veteran bands have good nights and bad nights, particularly outfits that are on the road for months at a time. So it's hard to believe that Scotland's Battlefield Band, a longtime ensemble in the midst of a multi-continent tour, put on such a powerful performance Wednesday night at the Barns at Wolf Trap. It was a wondrous, perfectly paced display by musicians firmly in command of their art.

The addition of Sean O'Donnell, who coaxed marvelously rich tones from his acoustic guitar, and the continuing improvement of fiddler Alasdair White were vital in achieving the sound that the band's sole founding member, keyboardist Alan Reid, has in mind, summed up in the slogan, "Forward with Scotland's past."

Reid, who's been with the band since it began in Glasgow in 1969, plays bass and melodies on

modern synthesizers, while the "past" aspect of the sound is largely provided by Mike Katz, a California transplant to Scotland who is an award-winning bagpiper. The ever-enthusiastic White matches Katz's furious flurries of notes on his fiddle, creating a Highland jam that rang in the Barns' rafters.

The vocal aspects were as impressive as the instrumentation. Reid's singing on "Five Bridges," "To a Mouse" and "The Road of Tears" was superbly matched by O'Donnell's, including his touching rendition of Tom Waits's "Shiver Me Timbers."

The band mates' chemistry at this point is uncanny. After all this time, Reid has found his best Battlefield Band in years.

Buzz McLain • November 10, 2006
The Washington Post



ALAN REID: Keyboard, accordion, vocals.
Highland and Small pipes, whistles: MIKE KATZ
ALASDAIR WHITE: Fiddle, Whistle, cittern.
Guitar, vocals: SEAN O'DONNELL

Photo: Simon Hollington

Letters To The Editor : WHAT THE PROMOTERS SAID

Des Moines, Iowa.

Thanks so much for helping bring these talented musicians to Des Moines, Iowa.

Celtic Music Association has been bringing in groups for fifteen years. The support network and management company were the most professional organization we have ever encountered. From advance CD's and posters to contacting media they were great support in helping us promote this concert.
Mike Glynn

Kingston, ON.

I just wanted to thank everyone for the successful concert in Kingston. Mitch, you were very helpful and supportive in getting the ball rolling. Robin, thanks so much for all you did in getting the concert promoted so well. And Alan, you guys put on such a fantastic show. I know that everyone who

attended was very impressed. I truly hope we can do something again in the future, and I hope this message finds Alan and the guys back home safe, at least for a little while.

Chris Murphy

Sydney, Australia.

There are other Celtic bands but there is only one Battlefield Band. I've heard them all, but these guys are the best I've worked with! Easy going and pleasant and then they go on stage and play great great music and always take the audience home with them – They will be back next year if I have my way.

Barry Gray

Sauga Festival, Cantabria.

The boys simply delighted everybody around here. And I have to tell you that this

has been a GREAT honour for me (both dealing with you and also with the band and their soundman). I'd love to have them in our schedule again despite not usually repeating performers this soon – I know the audience would be happy.

Rod Gomez

Artistic Director

Philadelphia Museum of Art.

I have to laugh imagining that these four – seemingly unassuming – musicians can capture the hearts and souls of the audience within seconds, yet they did just that. Their banter and their music is such a great combination and to be able to witness the cheers and the standing ovation at the end of the concert was very gratifying.

Laura Henrich

Evening Programs Director

BILLBOARD • "What the internationally renowned Irish band The Chieftains has done for Irish music, Battlefield Band is doing for the music of Scotland".

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"The Battlefield Band is turning into a national treasure, and exemplifies the ongoing nature of Scottish musical tradition. Not seen them yet? Shame on you." EDINBURGH EVENING NEWS

Kuala Lumpur, Australia, UK, USA, Germany, China...

Following the release of their Road Of Tears album, Battlefield Band have been hitting the road themselves, with some intensive touring taking them all over the globe. The first substantial tour of 2006 was in Germany, followed by a Spring US Tour – 21 concerts covering the whole of the USA. They had a great time, visited lots of new places, saw a lot of new faces and a lot of old friends turned up as well. The band would like to say thank you to the promoters of the concerts, their US Agent (Mitch Greenhill) and most of all the audiences who made it a great tour.

Following their return from the US and after a short British tour, Battlefield Band headed out to Kuala Lumpur for a concert at the Hilton Hotel on 27th May. Under the title 'An Evening with the Battlefield Band'. This event was organised by Selangor St Andrews Society in Kuala Lumpur and has been undertaken with support from the main sponsor: 'Gulf Air' (official Airline and Sponsor of the Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2006) who supported the flights. Excellent people one and all!

It seemed silly to go all the way out there and just come home again so, in the week after the KL



• Alan gets the 'Beatle treatment' in China.



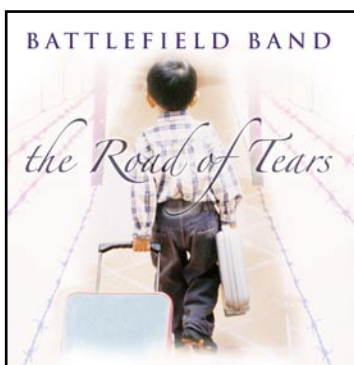
• NANJING University – Arts Institute

show, the band flew onto Australia for a 7 date tour, which included Brisbane, Tasmania, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne.

Not content with this, China was next on the agenda - a first even for the well travelled Battlefield Band. We had a couple of great concerts in this incredible country - an amazing experience, and hopefully one to be repeated!

The Road Of Tears Album

Emigrants and emigration are making the headlines all over the world. The problems and benefits are highlighted in the press, the TV, radio and discussed in pubs, over the dining table, and in dubiously reasoned political debate, as politicians search for the populist vote. The path of emigration is a well-trodden one in the history of the Celtic nations, so it is no surprise that many songs and compositions have been inspired by the subject.



Battlefield Band have not tried to come up with any answers; just music and song, contemporary and traditional, that show how the issue of 'Immigration' has always been as relevant as it is today.

The subject of Immigration has inspired much great and moving music and many words, and highlighted on this album are experiences from Scotland, Ireland,

the Americas and Australia, plus a setting by Alan Reid of Robbie Burns popular poem 'To A Mouse', as well as a couple of bonus songs from previous albums.

Prairie Home Companion

Battlefield Band finished their 2006 US tour with another appearance on the radio show 'A Prairie Home Companion', hosted by Garrison Keillor - what great show that is!

We've had a fantastic response since their previous appearance on the show in Nov 2005, with lots of enquiries about the songs and tunes that they played on the night. In particular, Alan's song 'The Road of Tears', which became the title track of the album, the sentiment of which seemed to resonate with many people. We've received lots of phone calls, letters & emails from people telling us that they found it very moving, so thanks again for all your feedback - we hope you enjoyed the album!

"I heard the song, Road of Tears, on the Prairie Home Companion. It is truly an awesome song, and had me literally in tears"

"I was listening to "Prairie Home Companion" and heard a fantastic song called 'Road of Tears', I was deeply touched".

ALASDAIR WHITE

An Clàr Geal (The White Album)

Temple Records COMD2099 • 4 stars



With *The White*

Album as its English subtitle, this CD from the Battlefield Band's fiddler should really be a double. Still only 23, White comes from Lewis and plays with a muscular gracefulness that confirms the piping tradition's strong influence. He recalls the sweet attack of Irish fiddlers like Paddy Glackin and there's a touch of Breton verve in there as well, as well as the Gaelic song tradition flavouring his lovely waltzes. Apposite and energetic accompaniments from a hand-picked crew support the case for White as the best thing to come out of Stornoway since Charlie MacLeod's black pudding.

Rob Adams • The Glasgow Herald
November 18th 2006

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MIKE KATZ • A Month Of Sundays

Temple Records COMD 2095



Piping nowadays is an international art - even if some music snobs think it should be called a sport - and this guy represents it perfectly. Californian, resident in Edinburgh and fronting of one of Scotland's top folk groups (Battlefield Band) Katz

has a soft spot for the old, unfashionable traditions of piping. Simple though these venerable tunes might at first appear, they carry a beauty, integrity and subtle rhythmic drive. With guest fiddle, concertina, whistle and Kevin MacKenzie's choppy, jazzy guitar, some of the 15 tracks - like the no-holds-barred opening dedication to William Blake - also take off in various sorts of purist-threatening directions. But remember, in a previous life Katz played electric bass in a Los Angeles funk band.

Norman Chalmers • Scotland On Sunday

NO TRICKS, NO GIMMICKS, JUST VERY FINE MUSIC • MOJO

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