

Cathie Ryan Selected Workshops

Presentation - Irish Mythology:

Irish Mythology: Tales from *The Tain*

Before the history of Ireland was set down, before Saint Patrick converted the Irish to Christianity, before the many invasions by the Normans and the English and the ensuing insurrections, there existed an Ireland known to us only through legend and myth. This was an Ireland of enchantment, peopled by gods and goddesses who lived alongside mortals. We know them in Celtic lore as giants, shape changers, magicians, warriors, kings and queens. The national epic of Ireland, *The Tain*, is rich with such characters. The focus in this presentation will be the opening story of *The Tain*, *The Pangs of Ulster*. To honor the oral tradition, Cathie will begin the presentation by telling the story, so there is no need for advance preparation. However, she highly recommends reading *The Tain*. It is full of wonderful, larger than life characters whose stories hold deep psychological relevance for us today. She recommends Thomas Kinsella's translation of *The Tain* (Oxford University Press.) You can also find stories from *The Tain* and more Irish myths on line at: <http://www.luminarium.org/mythology/ireland/>

1 hour

Presentation - Irish folklore:

Brigid: Goddess and Saint

Most of us are reminded of the importance of St Brigid by the versions of her cross we see both here and in Ireland. Her cross, woven of rushes each St Brigid's eve, was shaped to resemble the sun and its rays and is used to protect the house from fire or harm. But there is much more to know about Brigid. In folklore she is known as one of the triple goddesses whose people celebrated Imbolc – the festival of Spring. In Irish myth she is the only divine figure that is equal to the great god Lú. And within these stories we find remnants attributed to the saint who shared her name - St. Brigid, one of Ireland's three patron saints, celebrated in Ireland on her feast day, February 1st. In this presentation we will draw from the rich well of poetry, stories and songs of Brigid to discover more about her.

1 hour

Workshop: Irish Traditional Singing

Music and singing have played a crucial role in the survival and growth of the Irish as a people and a nation. Traditional song has carried the experiences, humor, character, and history of the Irish through the centuries. In this workshop we will discuss the historical importance of song and experience the joy of exploring and singing some great traditional songs. We will focus on the oral tradition of sean nos (old style) singing by listening to some of the different regional styles found throughout Ireland and by discussing the rudiments and framework of the style. We will learn a lullaby in Irish, the Irish national anthem, and, time permitting, more traditional song. We will use lyric sheets and learn the melodies by ear so please bring tape recorders with you, if you like.

1 hr 30 min

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“I HIGHLY RECOMMEND CATHIE RYAN AS A TRADITIONAL SINGER, PERFORMER AND TEACHER...ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR TEACHERS AT GAELIC ROOTS...A TRUE PROFESSIONAL...”
SEAMUS CONNELLY, DIRECTOR IRISH PROGRAMS, BOSTON COLLEGE

*“HER WORKSHOPS WERE AN ABSOLUTE HIGHLIGHT OF THE FESTIVAL.”*BRENDAN MCDONOUGH, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, AN RI RA MONTANA IRISH FESTIVAL, BUTTE, MT

“THE POSITIVE FEEDBACK ON CATHIE’S CLASSES FILLED THREE PAGES! I FOUND CATHIE TO BE THOROUGHLY PROFESSIONAL, AND PASSIONATELY DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION AND PRESERVATION OF HER ART.”
JIM MAGILL, DIRECTOR, SWANNANOVA GATHERING, WARREN WILSON COLLEGE, ASHEVILLE, NC

Presentations on Irish mythology and folklore :

- Glucksman Ireland House, New York University
- Warren Wilson College, Asheville, NC
- The Irish American Historical Society, NYC
- The C.G. Jung Foundation, NYC
- Jung in Ireland, Various locations throughout Ireland (for 14 years)

Irish Traditional Singing workshops:

- Gaelic Roots, Boston College
- Swannanoa Gathering Celtic Week, Asheville, NC
- Án Ri Rá Montana Irish Festival, Butte, MT
- Numerous schools and colleges throughout the USA and Canada