

Dana Lyn & Kyle Sanna

Duo Bio

Hailed as “ground-breaking” by noted folklorist and NEA Award-recipient Mick Moloney and “bursting with creativity” by renowned fiddler Kevin Burke, Dana Lyn and Kyle Sanna connect the dots between their experience as composers and improvisers in New York City’s rich musical community and their deep admiration for traditional Irish music. The fiddle/guitar duo has collaborated with some of the greatest living interpreters of Irish music, including Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill, Cillian Vallely, Kevin Burke, and Mick McAuley.

Since 2015, Lyn and Sanna have been engaged in the exploration of environmental themes. Their projects “The Great Arc” and “The Coral Suite” celebrate biodiversity through Lyn’s artwork while also highlighting pressing environmental issues.

Lyn and Sanna have brought their “Through the Looking Glass” approach to traditional music to clubs, festival stages and concert halls throughout the US and Canada. They have taught workshops at the Old Songs Festival, the Catskills Irish Arts Festival, the Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival, Wellesley College, West Virginia’s Augusta Heritage Center, Traditional Arts in Upstate New York, and have been ensemble residents at the Avaloch Farm Music Institute in Boscawen, NH.

Their second album, “The Great Arc”, is inspired by and concerned with extinct and endangered animal species. The Irish Echo hailed it as “a deep musical work full of lavish, evocative textures” and the Dublin-based Grammy-winning singer Susan McKeown called it “sublime”.

Picking up where “The Great Arc” left off, Lyn and Sanna continue their investigation of environmental fragility with “The Coral Suite”: an evocative sequence of Irish tunes that mirrors the life cycles and natural processes that occur within coral reef ecosystems. With the rich vocabulary of Irish melody, and with light boxes and animated projections featuring Dana Lyn’s artwork, Lyn and Sanna create an audiovisual poem for the reef, paying tribute to its miraculous biodiversity while calling attention to the urgent need for its protection.

Dana Lyn & Kyle Sanna collaborated with choreographer Darrah Carr Byrne and her company Darrah Carr Dance to produce two concerts based on their environmentally-themed albums: “Dancing The Great Arc” and “Dancing The Coral Suite”, which premiered at New York’s Irish Arts Center for six sold-out performances.

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Member Bios

DANA LYN

Brooklyn-based musician Dana Lyn has performed at New York's Lincoln Center, Beacon Theater, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Carnegie Hall and Town Hall, as well as folk festivals and dive bars the world over. A violinist/fiddler, violist, pianist and enthusiastic bass player, she is at home in a wide range of musical genres and has worked with Tony Award-winning musicians Stew and Heidi Rodewald, actor-directors Ethan Hawke and Vincent D'Onofrio, Imani Uzuri, Somi, D'Angelo and the Vanguard, 2017 MacArthur Fellow Taylor Mac, Bruce Springsteen, the Elysian Fields, Irish poet Louis de Paor, Killer Mike and the Walkmen.

As a composer, she has received commissions from the Brooklyn Rider, the National Arts Council of Ireland, the Inception Orchestra, the Apple Hill String Quartet, the Portland Chamber Music Festival, the Irish Arts Center and the New Orchestra of Washington, among others. Her music has been performed at the Savannah Music Festival, the Kilkenny Arts Festival, the Bridgehampton and Portland Chamber Music Festivals, Austin's NMASS, the Rockport Celtic Festival, Oberlin Conservatory, the Stillwater Music Festival and at Carnegie Hall. Her arrangements for fiddler Martin Hayes and the Brooklyn Rider were featured on WNYC's New Sounds and she contributed string arrangements to Catherine Russell's Grammy-nominated record "Alone Together" and Cherish the Ladies' PBS special "An Irish Homecoming."

Lyn has also worked extensively in theater; she was cast as an onstage musician/actress in the Public Theater's production of Hamlet (Shakespeare in the Park, 2008; dir. by Oskar Eustis), The Cherry Orchard and The Winter's Tale (BAM, 2009; dir. by Sam Mendes), and Clive, an adaptation of Bertold Brecht's play Baal, (The New Group, 2013; dir. by Ethan Hawke). In 2014, she was an onstage musician and the Musical Director of Family Album (OSF, dir. by Joanna Settle), by Stew and Heidi Rodewald. She currently plays in the band of the Tony Award-winning musical, Hadestown. Dana is also a well-versed fiddle player in the Irish tradition; she was featured in two RTE documentaries about traditional Irish music, "The Raw Bar" and "Geanntraí", and has toured with Grammy Award-winning vocalist Susan McKeown, the late great Scots fiddler Johnny Cunningham and The Green Fields of America.

Dana has released eight albums under her name, all of which she produced or co-produced. She has created album art for four of her albums and stop-motion animations in support of her music. Currently, her own projects include a sextet, "[Mother Octopus](#)", a collaboration with actor Vincent D'Onofrio called [Slim Bone Head Volt](#), and a [duo with guitarist Kyle Sanna](#). She performs with [Taylor Mac's 24 Decades of Popular Music in 24 Hours](#) and Holiday Sauce, with "Notes of a Native Song" by Stew and the Negro Problem and the [Hank Roberts Sextet](#). Dana was an artist

in residence at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in the Spring of 2017; most recently, she was a member of the Joe's Pub Working Group, an awardee of the American Composers Forum Create Commission in 2018 and a recipient of a 2020 NYFA Women's Fund Award for Media, Music and Theater.

KYLE SANNA

Hailed as a "first rate" and "versatile" musician by *The New Yorker*, guitarist and composer Kyle Sanna is on the move: performing traditional Irish music as well as jazz and improvised music, composing for ensembles, and producing recordings for other artists.

He has collaborated with and performed alongside modern virtuosos like Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, and Chris Thile, and with some of the greatest living interpreters of the Irish tradition including Martin Hayes and Seamus Egan.

Sanna's music has been described as "unconventionally beautiful" by WNYC's *New Sounds* and *Sound Check* host John Schaefer and has been performed at venues across the globe: at the Bach House in Eisenach, Germany, Oman's Royal Opera House, Sydney's ABC studios, Taipei's National Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, and many points between.

His "ruminative and shape-shifting" (*San Francisco Chronicle*) work for string quartet, 'Sequence for Minor White', won First Prize in the 2018 Charlotte New Music Festival Composition Competition. Kyle Sanna was a Finalist in the 2019 Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra Call for Scores and in Texas A&M University's Fresh Minds Festival. He has received commissions from Beta Collide, Brooklyn Rider, the Knights, Palaver Strings, and flutist Alex Sopp.

Kyle Sanna has arranged music for Béla Fleck, Jan Vogler, Anne-Sofie von Otter, Martin Hayes, and for Yo-Yo Ma on two Grammy Award-winning albums: 2010's "Songs of Joy and Peace" and 2016's "Sing Me Home" with Silkroad. His arrangements have appeared on *The Colbert Report*, NPR's *Performance Today*, and on the Sony Classical, Sony Masterworks, and Naïve labels.

Kyle Sanna studied music at the University of Oregon and the Université Lumière Lyon II in France. He is a member of Kinan Azmeh's CityBand, The Seamus Egan Project, Martin Hayes and the Common Ground Ensemble, Peter Apfelbaum's Sparkler, Ground Patrol, We the Gleaners, and a duo with violinist Dana Lyn. He lives in Brooklyn, NY.

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