



# Celtara

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## Biography

CELTARA are five accomplished musicians with a love for the beauty of acoustic Celtic music. Hailing from the Canadian prairies, Celtara's signature arrangements are brought to life with a rich blend of instruments and exquisite multi-part vocal harmony. From flying-fingered foot-stomping jigs and reels, to beautiful ballads and richly textured songs, Celtara entertains their audiences with Celtic influenced traditional music from Ireland, Scotland, England, Canada, Scandinavia and France, as well as contemporary original music from its members and beyond.

Celtara is equally at home in concert halls as they are in folk clubs, festivals, ceilidhs, community halls, dances and house concerts. The band - **BONNIE GREGORY** (fiddle, harp, vocals), **ANDREAS ILLIG** (guitar, Irish bouzouki), **TAMI COOPER** (flute, whistle, vocals), **STEVEN BELL** (accordion, piano, vocals), and **MARK ARNISON** (bodhran, world percussion) have entertained audiences large and small since 2004, from sold-out shows in soft-seat theatres to the intimate settings of house concerts, a VIA train, or Edmonton's Riverboat Queen. They love performing – and it shows, as they bring their infectious energy, engaging warmth and humour wherever they play. Audience members have described their experience of a Celtara concert as “joyous”, “inspiring”, “a timeless and enchanting evening”, and “awesome, beautiful, toe-tapping music.”

“Wonderful music, a blend of amazing distinct instruments brought together with enthusiasm, love and humour.”

-Leigh B.

The tapestry of Celtara's music springs from the band members' diverse musical backgrounds, with each bringing their unique thread to the collaboration. Bonnie Gregory, originally a classical violinist, developed her talent for flawless jigs, reels and airs in the band *Scona Brae*. Also from *Scona Brae* is Andreas (Andy) Illig, who has proven himself a popular guitarist on the Alberta Celtic scene backing *The McDades* and Maria Dunn. Tami Cooper also plays flute and sings with Keri Lynn Zwicker's *Harp Rouge Trio*, has toured and recorded with David Wilkie's *Cowboy Celtic*, and was a founding member of the long-lived Celtic quartet *Sheela Na Gigh*. Mark Arnison, also hailing from *Sheela Na Gigh*, brings traditional, classical and world-beat percussion into the mix. Rounding out the blend is Steven Bell, a composer/accordionist/pianist with an extensive classical, jazz and pop background.

“Awesome, beautiful, toe-tapping music!”

-The Munroes

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Celtara recently released their second album, *More Than One True Love* (January 2011). It follows their debut recording *Until the Morning Light*, which was released in 2007. The twelve tracks on each album are a balanced mix of songs and instrumentals. *More Than One True Love* placed #7 on CKUA's top 30 chart the week it was released!

## Reviews & Quotes

“The music’s great, there’s beautiful production on this album; it’s a lovely recording – I know you’re going to love it.”

*Andy Donnelly, host of the Celtic Show, CKUA*

“...the album is an impressive set. Sonically the disc presents a warm tone with well-defined and balanced mixes, and the graphic art direction and layout of the package is stunning.”

*Peter North, music journalist and CKUA host*

“Celtara performed a delightful opening set at the Nick, easily winning over our audience with their great songs, singing and musicianship, and earned an enthusiastic and well-deserved encore.”

*Vic Bell, Artistic Director, Nickelodeon Music Club*

“The balancing act of traditionalism and genre exploration is taut and at times even thrilling here, at least in part due to what appears to be a generous partnership.”

*Tom Murray, Edmonton Journal*

“A great combination of talents.”

*Lark Clark, host of World Spinning, CKUA*

“One of the best Celtic acts on the prairies...It is evident Celtara has become a unit where the members breathe in unison and are on the same page when it comes to navigating the musical journey that is taking place.”

*Peter North, music journalist and CKUA*

“This is like a wee bit of Celtic heaven. Thank you” *R.G*

“This has been a timeless and enchanting evening. Music the way it should be played – intimate, immediate and full of warmth and grace. Loved your sound and your arrangements. Bravo!” *Ron Berezan*

“Truly hard to sit still! Thanks for a wonderful evening of inspiring music.” *Holly*

“Foot-tapping, celtic joy – Thank you!”

“Even though I’ve never set foot in Scotland or Ireland, I feel soooo homesick. Thank you all for sharing a piece of it with all of us.” *J. MacDonald*

“Heart wrenching, soul mending, spell-binding and original...” *J. Munro*

“Ah! To be wooed by the lilt of the music... to be cradled by the tune of the harp; to be held by the rhythm and to be rocked by the drums... it was heavenly to share this evening with you. Thank you for your gift of music for the soul.” *C. Koppel*

“When I closed my eyes...I could hear each player singly and together at the same time – quite the experience, thanks!” *Kate Q.*

“So very uplifting, Dancing music! Thank you for this enthusiastic blend of ‘sound’ and merriment...”

“Your music brought together all sorts of wonderful people and filled our house and hearts with a wonderful musical spirit and a great sense of life. Thank you!” *Jen*

“..a killer Celtic concert last night. Great evening!” *L. Foote*

“What a fantastic convergence! Your singular strengths came through, without overshadowing each other.” *Catherine and Ken*

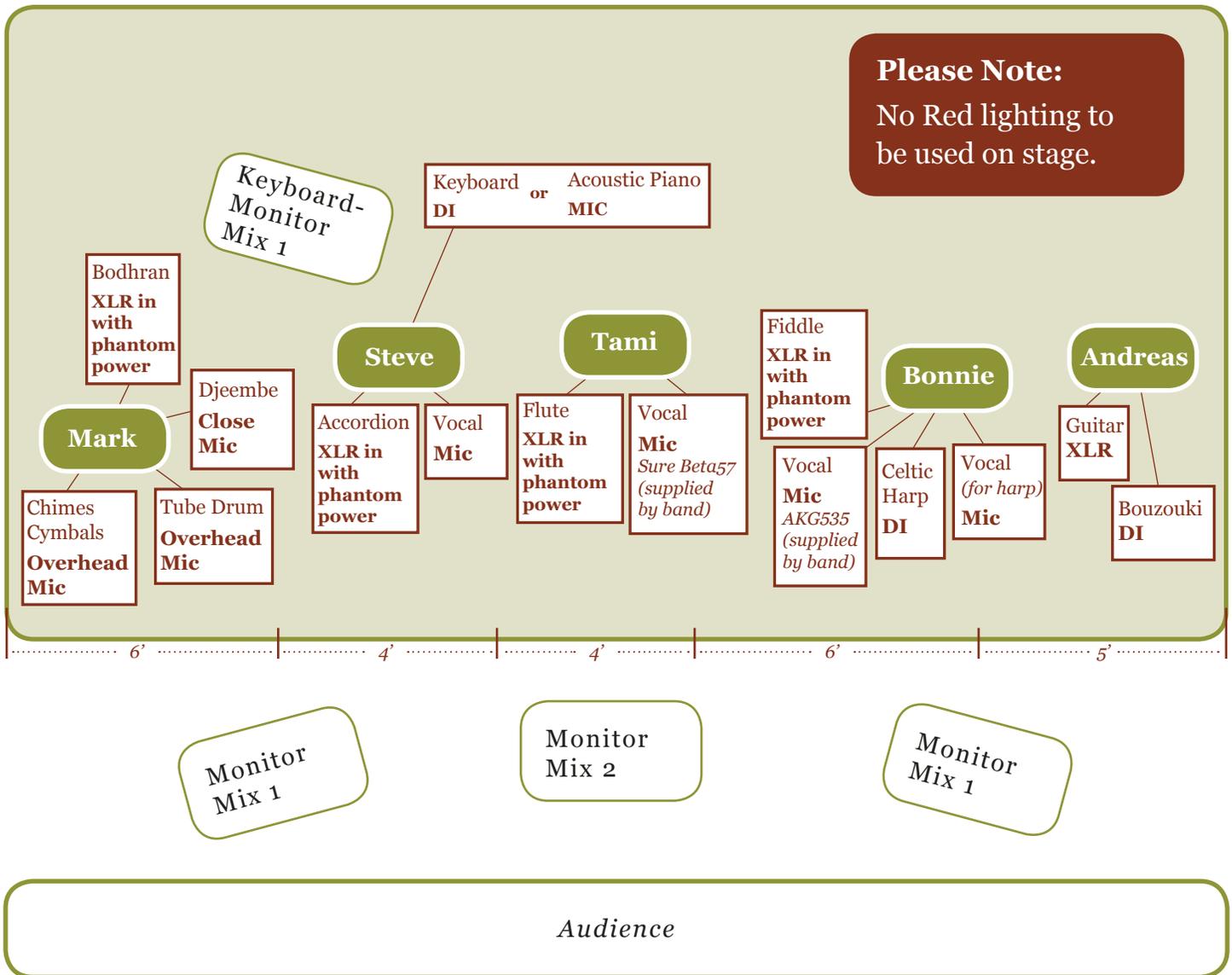
“What a great combination of music, instruments, voices, personalities... it was just so much fun...” *Joan*

“Can’t stop tapping my toes! Great fun. Such enthusiasm – it’s so contagious. Thanks for a fun evening!” *E.C.*

“My first real experience with Celtic music and you guys blew my mind – thank you all for the beautiful music – all the luck in the world for future success!” *Williem & Louise*

“You give me such a strong feeling of the gift of music, a gift of the heart in song.”

# Stage Plot & Tech Sheet



**Please note:**  
 This set-up can be modified in some situations. Please contact the band for more information.  
 celtara@telus.net or Steve at 780 437 7479