



Department of Music  
present



## Music Demonstration

### The Whistlebinkies (Scotland's Traditional Music Ensemble)

Date: 18 January 2006 (Wednesday)

Time: 5:00pm-6:00pm

Venue: Lee Hysan Concert Hall, Esther Lee Building,  
Chung Chi College



#### THE WHISTLEBINKIES

Scotland's Traditional Music Ensemble

**Peter Anderson**

**Anna Dagg**

**Stuart Eydmann**

**Mark Hayward**

**Rhona MacKay**

**Eddie McGuire**

**Rab Wallace**

*Scottish side drum / bodhran*

*fiddle / viola*

*fiddle / concertina / vocals*

*fiddle*

*clarsach / vocals*

*flute*

*lowland pipes / Scottish smallpipes*

#### BIOGRAPHY

Formed during the great surge of interest in traditional and Celtic music and song in the late 1960s, the group quickly evolved into a leading force in the field. **The Whistlebinkies** led the revival in the use of the bellows-blown bagpipes in Scotland and were the first to combine the three national instruments: the fiddle, bagpipes and clarsach (small Scottish harp) in regular performance. The repertoire is drawn from all periods of Scottish music and from all regions of the country. Members contribute new compositions within the tradition and the group often explores connections with other cultures. Arrangements evolve in a workshop situation with each member contributing his or her own skills and ideas.

The title of the group is an old Scots word for a wandering beggar musician - one who sat on a 'bink' (bench) playing a whistle. Some also see it as related to the Gaelic words for 'noble seat' where the bard - piper, harper or fiddler - would be given pride of place at the clan chief's table. There is also a popular edition of verse from 1832 in Glasgow entitled *Whistlebinkie - Songs for the Social Circle*.

**The Whistlebinkies** have toured extensively taking Scottish music to France, Germany, Italy, Finland, Iceland, Estonia, Sweden and Spain. In 1991 they were the first Scottish music group to tour the Peoples Republic of China, returning to Taiwan in 1999 and have appeared at major festivals such as the Edinburgh International Festival, the Hong Kong Folk Festival and the Festival Interceltique at Lorient, Brittany. In 1996 the group made an important contribution to the Scotland: Cultural Counterpoint festival at the Anderson Centre for the Arts, New York State.

**The Whistlebinkies** collaborate frequently on special musical projects and have worked with artists ranging from Yehudi Menuhin to David Essex. They have toured with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and have collaborated with Scottish Ballet in Eddie McGuire's ballet *The Spirit of Flight*. The band commissioned, premiered and broadcast *Scottish Circus* by the late John Cage. The Whistlebinkies have contributed much music to feature and documentary film, television, radio and stage drama productions.

In 2005, a Creative Scotland Award was awarded to Eddie McGuire, culminating in the collaboration between **The Whistlebinkies** and Scottish-based Chinese traditional music group Harmony in the premiere of *Tian Di Yuan (Defying Fate)*, a one-act ballet with music by Eddie McGuire. In 2006, **The Whistlebinkies** will appear at festivals and venues throughout the UK and will visit Hong Kong for a major collaborative project with the City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong.

~ All are welcome ~