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Media Release

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Event: CelticFest Mississippi
Date: September 9, 10, & 11, 2011
Place: Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum, Jackson, MS
Website: www.CelticFestMS.org
Contact: Valerie Plested, vaple21@gmail.com, 601.376.9866 (cell 601.454.5581)

BALLET MISSISSIPPI KICKS UP ITS HEELS FOR CELTICFEST

(Jackson, MS) – Ballet Mississippi is partnering with CelticFest Mississippi for the festival's 20th anniversary celebration, September 9th to 11th. Eighteen of Ballet Mississippi's students will be performing two selections from the Irish-themed ballet, *As An Céilí*. The name translates from the Irish language as 'From the Céilí' (a céilí is a party with music and social dancing). The piece was choreographed by Catherine Bishop, TCRG, the teacher and artistic director for the Jackson Irish Dancers.

All five movements of *As An Céilí* were performed at Thalia Mara Hall several years ago by Ballet Mississippi with members of the Jackson Irish Dancers. The first section is ballet dancing set to Irish traditional music, while the other section being performed at CelticFest is Irish traditional dancing performed to modern Irish music.

This is the first time the Celtic Heritage Society has partnered with Ballet Mississippi. "It is such a great honor and privilege to be a part of one of the best Celtic festivals in this country," says David Keary, Director of Ballet Mississippi. "It is absolutely amazing what CelticFest brings here - when you look at the many outstanding Irish musicians from all over the world, coming to Jackson, MS to share their talent and entertain - where else are we going to have this caliber? For Irish-loving fans, this is the equivalent of the USA IBC!"

CelticFest Mississippi is a celebration of traditional music, dance, and culture of the Celtic nations including Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man and Brittany. It takes place on September 9th-11th at the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum. The weekend features an exceptional variety of exciting Irish and Scottish music and dance on 8 stages, plus free Celtic heritage, music and dance workshops, a children's area, specialty vendors, and plenty of food and drink. Because much of the festival takes place indoors, CelticFest will be held RAIN or SHINE.

Ballet Mississippi, originally established by the Jackson Ballet Guild in 1964. Its mission is to offer professional training and education to the many young artists in our state in a disciplined and well-structured curriculum in classical ballet as the foundation for all dance forms. Advanced students study in major summer programs through out the United States.

CelticFest sponsors include BankPlus, Fenian's Irish Pub, Wine & Spirits In the Quarter, Cabot Lodge Millsaps, Capital Cities Beverages and Guinness, Jackson Free Press, Jackson Irish Dancers, Broadstreet Baking Co, Bravo, Sal&Mookie's, the Foundation for Public Broadcasting, and Cups. This project is also funded in part by a grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission, a state agency and by South Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Mississippi Arts Commission.

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