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**Eileen Ivers: An Irish Christmas - An Nollaig  
at the Berrie Center at Ramapo College of New Jersey  
December 9**

(MAHWAH, NJ) - On Sunday, December 9, 2012, The Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts at Ramapo College of NJ will present **Eileen Ivers: An Irish Christmas - An Nollaig** at 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., in the Sharp Theater.

Eileen Ivers and Immigrant Soul capture the spirit and magic of the season in their heartwarming holiday show. Nine time All-Ireland Fiddle Champion and music star of *Riverdance*, Eileen Ivers has changed the way audiences think about the violin. Ivers is hailed as one of the great innovators and pioneers in the Celtic and World Music genres and she has established herself as the pre-eminent exponent of the Irish fiddle in the world today.

Eileen Ivers has been called "the future of the Celtic fiddle," by *The Washington Post*. *The New York Times* called her "The Jimi Hendrix of the violin." *Billboard* has called her "A sensation!" Ivers and her ensemble are taking the holiday festivities across the U.S. this December in a thirteen city tour. Her performances at the Berrie Center have been sell-out sensations for a number of years. This year is destined to repeat those fabulous ticket sales.

Ivers has performed with a myriad of pop icons and world-class orchestras. For An Nollaig, a special treat is that she will once again be joined by an acclaimed choir of Ramapo College students, led by Professor Lisa Lutter. Recalling the roaring hearths and roars of laughter that are part and parcel of Christmas in Irish families, virtuoso fiddler Eileen Ivers interweaves age-old Wren Day songs, beloved American carols, and even a jigging Bach in An Irish Christmas: An Nollaig.

With her signature warmth, Ivers invites listeners in for a tuneful, soulful celebration that's as comforting as a favorite carol and a slice of Christmas cake.

Ivers presents a vision of Christmastide that embraces the friendliness of a family gathering and the supreme musicality of a seasoned, skilled master. "There is so much joy in the season, and I wanted to bring that out to welcome listeners in," explains Ivers with a smile. "Just like ornaments on a Christmas tree, the tunes in An Nollaig have been lovingly passed down through the generations as well. Some are hundreds of years old--some are new."

In Ivers's capable hands, "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" becomes a playful jig, and the 20<sup>th</sup> century classic "Do You Hear What I Hear?" becomes a rousing reel. Even Bach takes on an Irish lilt, as Ivers transforms "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," giving the 9/8

piece a striking feel of an Irish three making dancing irresistible. This clever rethinking of Christmas chestnuts comes naturally to Ivers, who is equally adept at bringing ancient Irish traditions to life. She explores the curious traditional celebration on December 26, the feast of St. Stephen, which is also known as Wren Day in Ireland. Ivers draws on songs sung by young village boys who would decorate a wren and go from door to door, as well as on the Irish legends surrounding the wren, as betrayer of St. Stephen's hiding place to the Romans, or as the sly winner of a contest among birds. Ivers also touches on a sensitive Yuletide topic: the dreaded fruitcake. Though Ivers recalls her family's luscious porter-and-whiskey-soaked version, she recounts the quirky adventure of the hapless Miss Fogarty, whose Christmas cake leads not to merriment, but to food poisoning ("Miss Fogarty's Christmas Cake").

The spirit of sharing has led Ivers to donate some of the proceeds of CD sales on tour to the Salvation Army. "It's a full circle," she notes. "We give back to people who don't have the same blessings. That's what Christmas means to us, and that makes this one of my favorite times of the year to perform."

**Tickets for the EILEEN IVERS: AN IRISH CRISTMAS - AN NOLLAG** shows at the Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts at Ramapo College are \$35, \$32, \$25 and Children under 17: \$18. To purchase tickets, call the box office at (201) 684-7844 or visit <http://www.ramapo.edu/berriecenter/events/december.html>

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Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as sixth in the Best Regional Universities North category, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 6,008 students and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New Jersey/New York border.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers six graduate programs as well as articulated programs with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, New York Chiropractic College, New York University College of Dentistry, SUNY State College of Optometry and New York College of Podiatric Medicine.