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## **SONES DE MÉXICO JOINS WITH THE IRISH MUSIC SCHOOL OF CHICAGO AT THE OLD TOWN SCHOOL OF FOLK MUSIC MARCH 21 FOR A UNIQUE CONCERT COLLABORATION**

*Concert will tell the story of the St. Patrick's Battalion, Irish immigrants who fought on the side of Mexico during the Mexican-American War of 1846-48*

WHO: Sones de México Ensemble and Seán Cleland & The Irish Music School of Chicago

WHAT: Los San Patricios: The Story of the St. Patrick's Battalion

WHERE: Old Town School of Folk Music, 4545 N Lincoln Ave · Szold Music & Dance Hall

WHEN: Saturday, March 21, 2015, 7pm

TICKETS: \$30 General Public, \$28 Old Town School Members

BOXOFFICE & INFO: (773) 728-6000, [www.oldtownschool.org](http://www.oldtownschool.org)

CHICAGO – Two highly respected Chicago organizations, each representing a community with deep immigrant roots, will share one stage when Mexican folk music ensemble **Sones de México** joins forces with Seán Cleland and the faculty of **The Irish Music School of Chicago** at **Szold Hall of the Old Town School of Folk Music, 4545 N. Lincoln Ave in Chicago, on Saturday, March 21 at 7pm**. The concert will use the fiddles, harps, accordions, foot tapping and voices of Irish jigs and Mexican *son* to tell the little-known story of *Los San Patricios*, the St. Patrick's Battalion. **Alex E. Chávez**, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Institute for Latino Studies Fellow at the University of Notre Dame and an accomplished musician with Los Condenados Huastecos and Dos Santos Anti-Beat Orquesta, is a consultant on the project.

Sones de México co-founder and Executive Director **Juan Díes** says *"From the very first time we jammed with these musicians back in 1999, I felt an instant musical affinity. 6/8 time, fiddle tunes, marches, harps, foot-tapping and a rich balladry tradition. After learning more about Irish history and playing with these musicians on several other occasions, I've continued to realize just how many parallels exist in our cultures."*

**Seán Cleland**, an award-winning Irish fiddler who played on Sones de México's 2002 album *Fandango on 18<sup>th</sup> Street* and founded the Irish Music School the following year, adds *"I first heard of the story of San Patricios around 1995 or so. At that time I was touring with The Drovers and teaching at the Old Town School. Juan Díes also worked at the school and his band and my band were quite friendly with each other. I brought this story to him and we have been developing the music and songs over these many years to reality."*

(continued)

**Alex Chávez** adds “*When you look carefully at this little-known historical moment that the San Patricios represent, it opens up an entire world of larger social connections and histories that resonate beyond the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the present, particularly when we consider contemporary issues like immigration and the U.S.-Mexico border. It’s an important and remarkable story, and indeed, music is an apt cultural vehicle for exposing audiences to the San Patricios.*”

**The Mexican Folkloric Dance Company of Chicago** and other special guests will also participate in the concert.

This concert is made possible in part by a grant from The Joyce Foundation. Media Sponsors include the Irish American News and Arte y Vida Chicago.

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**ABOUT SONES DE MÉXICO:** The group is Chicago’s premier folk music organization specializing in Mexican ‘son,’ a genre encompassing the roots of mariachi music and other regional styles, including huapango, gustos, chilenas, son jarocho, and more. The ensemble was formed in 1994 and soon incorporated as a non-profit organization to keep the tradition of Mexican ‘son’ alive in its many regional forms. As a performer and recording artist, they have developed and popularized many original arrangements of Mexican traditional tunes. Its original work has experimented cross-culturally with symphonic, Irish, folk, blues, C&W, jazz and rock, though never abandoning its roots in Mexican son.

The group has released six CDs: *¡Que Florezca! (Let it Bloom)*; *Fandango on 18th Street*; the GRAMMY® nominated *Esta Tierra Es Tuya (This Land is Your Land)*; *Fiesta Mexicana* (a children’s album); *¡Viva la Revolución!*; and *13 B’ak’tun*.

The organization is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with a commitment to teaching. The mission of Sones de México Ensemble is to promote greater appreciation of Mexican folk and traditional music and culture through innovative performance, education, and dissemination.

For more information, visit [www.sonesdemexico.com](http://www.sonesdemexico.com)

**ABOUT THE IRISH MUSIC SCHOOL OF CHICAGO:** The Irish Music School of Chicago teaches children and adults as it has been done for generations in Ireland and Irish communities around the world: as a collaboration between Irish musicians, teachers, students and the community itself. It was founded in 2003 by Chicago-bred and internationally acclaimed Irish fiddler Seán Cleland. As a young Irish-American determined to play traditional Irish music, Seán made repeated trips to Ireland. Back at home, he immersed himself in the vibrant Chicago Irish Music community, literally sitting at the feet of the mostly immigrant Irish musicians. Recognizing the need for a school of Irish traditional music, he envisioned a place that could provide a unifying presence for Irish music in Chicago, bringing younger generations of student Irish musicians into contact with the older generation of Irish musicians.

As a not-for-profit organization, the Irish Music School is committed to maintaining the strong tradition of Irish music, song and dance, to involve more people in the community of Irish music, and ensure that this type of music does not disappear in Chicago and the United States.

For more information, visit [www.irishmusicschool.org](http://www.irishmusicschool.org)

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