

Joy Dunlop

With talents ranging from singing to television presenting, dancing to award-winning Gaelic journalism, Joy certainly has more strings to her bow than most. Born and raised in the rural village of Connel, Argyll she was immersed in Gaelic culture from an early age where she won acclaim for her singing, dancing and enthusiasm for the music and language. Upon graduating from **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig** with an honours degree in Gaelic Language and Culture and the Anna NicDhonnchaidh prize for promoting Gaelic in the community, Joy combined her love for Gaelic singing with her passion for the language as Gaelic development officer for **An Comunn Gàidhealach**. After five and a half years she decided to concentrate on her burgeoning performing career, a successful move which prompted many to hail 2010 as "*Bliadhna Joy Dunlop*." (Joy Dunlop's Year)

In her singing career so far, Joy has won numerous illustrious awards. Several times the lead vocalist of winning traditional groups at the **International Pan Celtic Festival**, she was also runner-up in the festival's International Traditional Song competition in 2005. Winning the coveted **Gold Medal** at **The Royal National Mòd** in 2010, the **Oban Times Gold Medal** (2006) and **Puirt-a-Beul** competitions (2006) have confirmed her status as one of Gaeldom's most promising performers. A regular on the traditional music circuit, Joy is equally at ease entertaining home audiences at local cèilidhs as performing at major festivals. In recent years, she has also appeared at **Celtic Connections** (Scotland), **Celtic Colours** (Canada) and **Schotland Festival** (Netherlands) and has toured extensively as a solo & collaborative performer in the UK, Europe, Canada, America & New Zealand. Amongst other exciting new projects, 2010 saw her performing both in the UK and abroad with material from **Dùsgadh** (Awakening); her eagerly anticipated debut album released on her own record label **Sradag Music**. She was also nominated as '**Gaelic Singer of the Year**' at the 2010 **MG ALBA Trad Music Awards**.

In addition to her solo work, Joy is also heavily involved in Gaelic choral music as the conductor of **Còisir Cheann an Tuirc**, the award-winning Argyll male voice choir and as a member of the infamous Argyll ladies' choir **Atomic Piseag**, who have also enjoyed impressive competitive successes. She is both Gaelic tutor and active member of **Còisir Ghaidhlig Thaigh an Uillt** (who have swept the boards under her tutelage) and is one-quarter of **Dealrach**, an Argyll-based female quartet who won gold on their first competitive outing. Not confined to her vocal talents, Joy has also enjoyed competitive dance success, most notably, **Traditional Inter-Celtic Dance Champion** at the 2006 **Pan Celtic International Festival**. Currently, she is in high demand at workshops and festivals worldwide and is always eager to meet & swap steps with dancers of all genres and styles. She has a particular interest in the link between step dancing and Gaelic *puirt a beul* (mouth music) and has successfully explored this in both Scotland and Nova Scotia.

A popular language teacher, Joy has taught and lectured for a multitude of international Gaelic organisations, and also works as a translator and simultaneous interpreter. She gained a distinctive international perspective through a sabbatical as Gaelic Instructor-in-residence for **Fèis Mhàbu**, Cape Breton, in 2007, and through working with communities in New Zealand promoting and developing Gaelic language and song in 2008. These experiences have made her a popular guest speaker and MC for events and conferences both in the UK and abroad. Joy is also a highly sought-after local, national and international Mòd adjudicator for both Gaelic language and music competitions.

Lately, Joy has become an increasingly familiar face in Gaelic broadcasting, appearing extensively on BBC ALBA and even being interviewed on STV's primetime magazine programme **The Hour**. She has featured in music programmes **A gu U: An Cuala Tu, Tìr nan Òran, Guthan nan Gàidheal, Sorcha nan Reul, Bheir dhomh am fonn** and **Ar n-Aran Làitheil**, (which she also presented) and has been a guest speaker on current affairs programmes **Cunntas** and **Barail Bhoireannach**. She made her acting début in the BBC comedy **PC Alasdair Stiùbhart** and also featured in television specials **Na Piseagan** (BBC) and **Festival Bound** (Equator HD-Canada). A popular columnist, her writing has been commended at both the **Scottish Press Awards** and **Highlands and Islands Media Awards** and this, combined with regular stints on **Reidio nan Gàidheal**, has raised her profile as a powerful new Gaelic voice.