

# Damien O'Kane



## Some fact's at first...

- When and where were you born?

Ballymoney Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland  
7th October 1977

- Your height?

6''

- What is your favourite food?

Sunday roast dinner; bacon & cabbage

- Your favourite music?

Coldplay, U2, Greenday, Oasis.

- Your favourite movie?

"The shawshank redemption"

- Your favourite city / place in the world, you have visited so far?

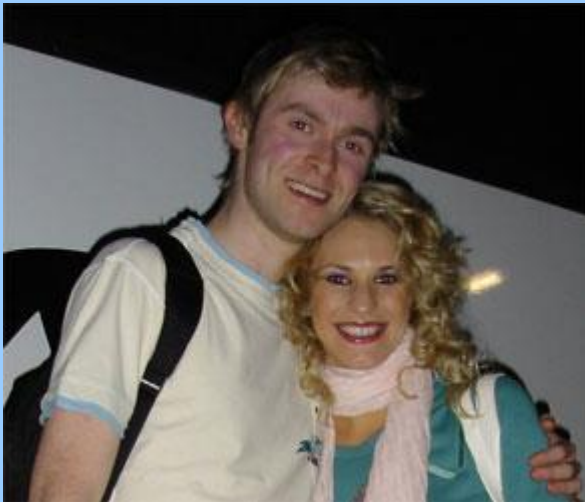
Sydney, Australia.

- Do you have any hidden talents, we don't know about?

I draw celtic designs for Irish Dancing Costumes in my spare time!

- What's the most treasured moment in your life, so far?

It is when Bernadette and I got engaged in July 2003! I always knew we were meant for each other.



Bernie's Enga

### About your family...

- Please tell us something about your parents - what do they do for their living? Do they dance as well?

My Dad sprays lorries and trucks.

My Mum is a shop assistant.

- Do you have any brothers or sisters? How old are they? Do they dance, too? What are their jobs?

I have one sister. Her name is Donna. She danced competitively but not in the show. She is now a primary school teacher.

- Is it hard for you, to be apart from your family for such a long time while touring?  
How often are you able to travel back home again?

I travel home on the tour breaks to see my family. It can be hard but it is one of the sacrifices of travelling the world but I do miss them a lot.

- What do your family think of your job as a Show Dancer? Are they proud of you?  
How often do they visit you on tour and watch you dancing the Show?

They think it is great and are extremely proud of what I have achieved. They try to see the show at least once a year.

### About your beginnings...

- Why did you start Irish Dancing and when? Who taught you during all the time?

My sister started first and I then followed. I was nine years old I have had 3 teachers in total. My last school was the McCaul Academy in Derry.

- How old have you been at your first competition?

Nine years old.

- Did you attend many championships as a competition dancer? Have you won?

We travelled to Feisanna all over Ireland and the UK, I won the All-Ireland and placed second at the World Championships as well as winning many Ulster and British titles.

- What was it like to do competitions?

It was most of the time quite enjoyable but sometimes very pressurising. It's nice to socialise with friends you have made over the many years of competitions.

- What do you like more – Show Dancing or doing competitions? Why?

I prefer show dancing as you can express yourself, move freely and it's more enjoyable to entertain and play to audience.

- What is – in your opinion – the most important difference between Show dancing and competitions?

*In show dancing we can use our arms. This is not the case in competitions. The basic dance moves are the same in both, show dancing and competitions.*

- Did you have any major injuries because of Irish Dancing?

*No, thank good!!!*

- Did you learn other kinds of dance?

*I have not really had the time, but I might do in the future.*

### *Becoming a Show Dancer...*

- Why did you want to join LotD?

*Because it is any Irish Dancers ambition to dance in a professional Dance Show.*

- Do you remember what you have thought or felt during your auditions?

*We all felt nervous and a lot of pain!!!*

- When did you do your auditions and do you have to wait a long time until they called you to join the Show?

*February 1996. We had to wait a few weeks.*

- How old have you been when you joined LotD?

*18 years.*

- Please describe your first day, you trained with LotD – do you remember what you have felt or thought? Have you been nervous or afraid not to meet the requirements?

*Pain!!! Pain!! Pain! As we worked for hours and hours!*

- Did you know some of the other troupe members before you joined?

*Yes a lot, because of competitions.*

- What was the hardest part to learn?

*Most of the show because everything was so new.*

*Getting the Leading Part...*



- Did you have to do auditions for your leading part, or did it just happen?

*Yes, we had to audition many times over the course of a few months until management decided.*

- When did you start practising the leading part and who taught you to dance the good guy? How long did it take, to learn the leading part?

*I picked up most of the steps myself and John Carey helped me learn a few of the really difficult ones.*

- What was the hardest part to learn as the Lord?

To be confident in front of an audience while leading the whole show.



- Did you have the chance to do your own choreography for your solo parts?

Most of the time within reason. Especially with arm movements not really with the steps.

- Do you remember your feelings while doing the lead the very first time? Have you been nervous?

I was very nervous but I soon got more confident and started to really enjoy it.

- Have you ever thought of doing the Bad Guy in the Show?

I did do it in Orland, Florida in 2000 five or six times.

- Who are you favourite dance partners when you are doing the lead?

My favourite dance partner is Bernadette. We work well together and there is chemistry there.





### *Through the years with LotD / FoF...*

- Please tell us something about the very first performance!

*It was very exciting! It was amazing to see the audience reactions.*

- Please describe your course of day while touring!

*Breakfast - Bus Journey - Hotel - Show - Bus - Bed -Repeat!!!*

- Do you like travelling to all those places around the world or is it hard work?

*The travelling can be tough but it is nice to see new places and to see different cultures. It is also nice to see each audience and there reaction to the show.*

- How much do you have to practice while touring?

2 hours a day.

- What is your memorable moment with LotD / FoF?

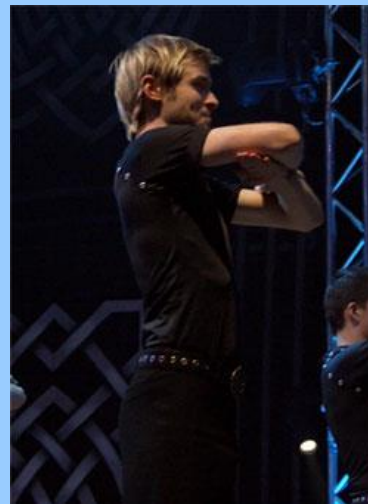
Oscar 1997

Feet of Flames – Hyde Park 1998



- What is your favourite dance in LotD and in FoF as a Lead Dancer and as a chorus dancer?

Warlords for both shows.



- How do you prepare for a show?

Stretch for 30 mins, light jogging on the spot, warm up as much as possible.



- Are you nervous before going on stage?

Not really, maybe a little!!

- Have you ever been with another Troupe? If so – when was it and why did you change?

I was with Troupe 2 for 8 months when it started in 1997. I was transferred back to T1 to dance the lead when Michael retired after Feet of Flames.

- Is there a special diet, you have to follow?

I eat lots of carbs for energy while we're on tour, but do not follow a strict diet.

- How do you get so much energy for a show?

Adrenalin!!!



Costumes & other equipment...

- Is it hard to handle the different sizes of stage in different cities?

It was hard at the start but we're used to it now.

- How long does it take to get ready before the show?

30 mins

- What are your favourite shoes to dance with?

Antonio Pacelli Super Flexi with metal Capezio taps.

- Your Shoe size?

8 ½ UK

- How often do you need new shoes (heavies and lights)? Do you have a special trick to break in new Heavies?

One a year for new heavies. I wear them for dancing in the chorus first and then after a couple of months wear them for lead.

nowadays & in the future...

- What do you do, when you get a long tour-break? Staying at home or doing another job - maybe dancing in one of the other shows or joining another LotD-Troupe in the meanwhile?

Rest and spend time with family and friends and draw celtic designs.

- How long do you plan to stay with LotD? Hopefully a long time!

Who knows? As long as my legs can dance!

- What are your (dancing and non-dancing) plans for your future?

Bernadette and I plan to maybe have a dance school in the future. I would maybe like to study Accountancy.

- Is there something you want to tell your fans, who are visiting [www.lordofthedance.at](http://www.lordofthedance.at) and <http://biography.lordofthedance.at> ?

Many thanks to all our fans for all their support over the past to years. It means a lot to us. We hope they continue to enjoy the show.

