

Thomas Cunningham



Some facts at first...

- When and where were you born?

16/12/78, Ireland.

- Your height?

About 5ft 9in.

- What is your favourite food?

Italian, Chinese, Japanese. I'll eat pretty much anything.

- Your favourite music?

Rock! U2 are the best band in the world.

- Your favourite movie?

„Top Gun“

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

New York.

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

Part-time soap actor in Ireland - "Fair City"

About your family...

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

My Dad is a builder not much of a dancer though!!!! My Mother has been known to throw a few shapes on the dance floor.

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

One Sister. She used to dance a long time ago. She is now in PoR.

- 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 always miss my family, but I talk to them all the time on the phone.

- 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 all think my job is great and are very supportive of me.

- There are a few relationships within the troupe – do you have a girlfriend?

Yes, Giada Costenaro.



About your beginnings...

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

To be honest my mother made me go at first. All I wanted to do was play football. I danced for Scoil Rince Oiriaila.

- How old have you been at your first competition?

About 6 or 7.

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

I attended all the major ones and did O.K.

- What was it like to do competitions?

For me it was all about the craic afterwards!

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

Show Dancing. You get paid for it - ONLY JOKING!!

The audience reactions can make the hairs stand on the back of your neck.



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

Probably the arm movements and teamwork.

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

No - thankfully.

- Did you learn other kinds of dance?

No. I know that Ciaran Devlin is also a keen Salsa Dancer.

Becoming a Show Dancer...

- Have you been with another Irish Dance Show, before you joined LotD?

No.

- Have you seen the Show before you applied for auditions for LotD?

Yes. I saw it 6 times in Dublin and London. I really love it.

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

I remember feeling exhausted and wondering what I had let myself in for.

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

I was called a few weeks after my auditions, but I had exams at school, so I didn't join the show for another 2 months.

- When did you join LotD? How old have you been?

I joined in 1997. I was 18.

- Have you been called directly to T1 or did you have some training before?

I did a few weekends of training in London before coming to T1.

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

I knew a few of them through competition.



- Please describe the feeling, to join an already existing troupe. Were you nervous or afraid not to meet the requirements?

I was kind of anxious at first, but everyone was very friendly and welcoming.

- What was the hardest part to learn?

The Dangerous Games steps were pretty hard to pick up.

- How much time did you get to learn your routines, until you first danced on stage with LotD? What was the first part you were allowed to dance? When was it?

The first numbers I did in Lord of the Dance were Warriors and Warlords on my first day in the show. I was worried that I was going to mess up, but I didn't. I have however, messed up plenty of times since.



Getting the Leading Part...

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

Everyone has to audition for a leading role.

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

Daire Nolan taught me the role over a few weeks.

- When and where did you first stepped on stage as Dark Lord?

My first show as lead was in Munich.



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

Nervous doesn't even begin to explain it!!!

- Who were your partners for this special show?

I can't remember to be honest.

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

No.

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

I don't have a favourite.

Through the years with LotD / FoF...

- Please describe your course of day while touring!

Wake up / get on bus / get off bus / shower / coffee / venue / sleep.

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

It's an unforgettable experience travelling around the world but it can get a little frustrating living out of a suitcase sometimes.

- How much do you have to practice while touring?

Every day we line the show up and drill certain numbers on stage on stage to keep it sharp.

- What is your memorable moment with LotD / FoF?

Feet of Flames in Madison Square Garden.

- Which Show do you personally like more – LotD or FoF? Why?

Feet of Flames. It was the next level.

- What is your favourite dance in LotD and in FoF (in Hard-/Softshoes) as a Lead Dancer and as a chorus dancer?

Lead: Hell's Kitchen - I like the interaction between both sides.

Chorus: Encore - it's the pinnacle of the Show.



- How do you prepare for a show?

Stretch out and then dance a bit to warm up.

- Are you nervous before going on stage?

Not anymore, only if I know some people in the audience.



- Have you ever been with another Troupe? If so – when was it?

Feet of Flames only.

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

I'm on a Seafood diet!!!

I see food and I eat it!!! (That's not really funny, SORRY!)

Costumes & other equipment...

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

Sometimes, but we always work it out.

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

Not long for the lads.

I feel so sorry for the girls with all the hair and make up etc.!

- What is your favourite costume (in LotD / FoF - past and present)?

The Warlords costume in Feet of Flames. The long leather jacket made me feel like I was in the Matrix. COOL!!

- What are your favourite shoes to dance with?

Pacelli Taps.

- Your shoe size?

7 ½.

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

About once a year.

No - I just get blisters.

nowadays & in the future...

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

I honestly don't know. I just take it one year at a time and see how things are going.

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

I plan to win the Lotto and retire to a beach house in Barbados.

