

# Liz Knowles



Liz's fascination with music lies in the many ways one can **arrive**, **land**, and **leave** a note. For her, the most interesting stuff in music happens in the liminal space between the notes, suggesting an interesting parallel to life as well. It is not the 'landings' but the in-betweens, the seemingly incongruous details of her life, that intertwine and overlap to make her the player and person she is today.

## Landings

She has brought her distinctive sound—the fire and finesse of Irish fiddle music combined with the tonal richness of the classical violin—to concert stages and festivals across the world. Her auspicious beginnings as the fiddler for **Riverdance** and as soloist on the soundtrack for the film **Michael Collins** established her as a virtuosic and versatile performer, and she has since performed as soloist with such orchestras as the **New York Pops** and the **National Symphony Orchestra**, played on **Broadway** with *The Pirate Queen* and *The Green Bird*, and traveled the world for over four years as music director, composer and performer with **Celtic Legends** and **Celtic Dances**. She has played in some remarkable and magical locations around the world including an island festival off the coast of France where the concert had to be timed with the tides and a Malaysian festival at the foot of a rainforest—both tours were with the **String Sisters**. Her trio, **Open the Door for Three** has played in a bullring and at the Kennedy Center and the newly formed **Martin Hayes Quartet** recorded their first album, *Blue*, at the stately Bantry House on the west coast of Ireland.

## Arrivals

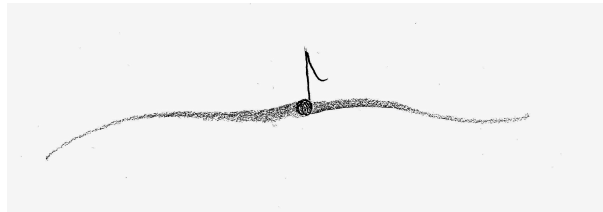
She was born and raised in Kentucky, she played baroque music, learned Irish music by accident on Long Island, and went to design school. Liz first distinguished herself as a violinist in New York City, performing in such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center and Broadway, with artists such as Marcus Roberts, the Bang-on-a-Can Orchestra, Bobby McFerrin, Paula Cole, Steve Reich, Eliot Goldenthal, Rachel Barton, Don Henley, and Tim O'Brien. It was also in New York that she discovered her true passion for Irish music, becoming a member of the John Whelan Band, the renowned Cherish the Ladies, and Ensemble Galilei. Today, she is well respected on both sides of the Atlantic as a performer and as a well-known and sought-after teacher of Irish music. Her compositions and arrangements of tunes and songs have been recorded and performed by John Whelan, Flook, Chicago's Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, Liz Carroll, Beolach, Bachue, J.P. Cormier, Michael Black, John Doyle, and Ensemble Galilei. It has been

a natural progression to assume a producer role for cd, concert and theatrical productions over the years.

## Leavings

Liz is a perpetual student and sought-after teacher, actively seeking elevated conversation through music, practice, design, art, writing, reading, and walking. She is currently finishing a book about Irish fiddling and the art of practice and is exploring the concept of the in-between and liminal spaces in her music, art, writing, and teaching. Stay tuned- she will let you know when she lands again!

[www.lizknowles.com](http://www.lizknowles.com)



### Instruments:

Violin by Peter Seman, Skokie, IL  
Hardanger (viola d'amore, 5+5) by Salve Hakedal, Oslo, Norway

### Press quotes:

*'Fiddler Liz Knowles is one of North America's finest exponents of Irish music'*  
--Alex Monaghan, *Living Tradition*

*"Liz is an acknowledged fiddle maestro..."*  
Mark Lysaght, *Irish Music Magazine*

*"Every time Knowles laid into one of her foot-stomping reels, she'd set the auditorium ablaze."*  
- Channing Gray, *Providence Journal-Bulletin Arts*

*"The Riverdance band is "a nine-piece band which marvelously performs a wide array of music for the various dance forms. Most impressive was hell-for-leather fiddler Liz Knowles."*  
- Rick Pender, *City Beat*