

# THE STUNNING

**The Stunning** formed in 1987 in Galway, Ireland. They had their first top twenty single a year later and two more top ten hits before their debut album 'Paradise in the Picturehouse' hit the number one spot in 1990 and remained there for 5 weeks. The band was now a household name and became the soundtrack to the lives of a whole generation of people brought up in Ireland during the late 80's and 90's. Their diverse musical influences of alternative rock, soul, blues and country resulted in an eclectic mix that was difficult to categorize but loved by audiences. A live album 'Tightrope' was released in 1993 before the band split up a year later to pursue other projects. In 2003, after an absence of almost ten years, the band reformed for an 18-date tour, which turned out to be one of the highest grossing tours in Ireland of that year. The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their debut album was celebrated with a sell-out nationwide tour in 2012 and the same year around 30,000 people turned out to see the band play a free concert in their old hometown of Galway city, a testament to the timeless quality of their music.

And more was to come: in May 2017 they released a brand new single 'Brighten Up My Life', which has received over 1000 plays on Irish radio to date. Another new single 'Always You' was released in November of the same year, the day before their first sell-out London show in 23 years. 'Twice Around the World', a re-recorded, re-imagined version of their number one album 'Once Around the World' - which also includes the new singles - is due for release in March 2018 with a nationwide tour kicking off the same day. The Stunning are most definitely back, sounding as fresh as ever.

1990 was a pivotal year in Ireland. The national football team had done the country proud in the World Cup in Italy and Ireland had her first lady president. There was also a new soundtrack to that summer, the debut album by a young band from the west of Ireland. Coming out of Galway city, The Stunning took Ireland by storm, and shifted the focus from a Dublin-centric rock scene to the provinces, paving the way for many more artists to come. They released a string of hit singles and 2 number one albums and toured relentlessly, building up a following that would make them one of the most successful Irish bands ever. Their debut album '**Paradise in the Picturehouse**' spent five weeks at number one in 1990 and became one of the best-selling Irish albums of all time. Two years later, the follow up '**Once Around The World**' also hit the number one spot, and the band went on to sell over 100,000 albums in Ireland alone. They toured the US and the UK with the likes of Bob Dylan and the B52's.

**"Brewing Up A Storm"** has become an anthem of sorts - a rallying call at football internationals and a guaranteed floor-filler in pubs and clubs around the country. In 2016 the song featured on the official commercial for the UEFA Euro football championships, boosting the bands popularity even further. Songs such as **"Half Past Two"**, **"Romeo's on Fire"**, and **"Everything that Rises"** have become part of the Irish music canon, featuring in movies, on numerous 'Best of Irish rock' compilations and regularly on airwaves. Even the current **President of Ireland**, Michael D. Higgins is a fan. He performed one of his poems on the band's live album '**Tightrope**'.

**Breaking up and making up** - Despite two number one albums, winning major music awards and a huge fanbase, the band split in 1994. They eventually reformed in 2003 for the re-release of their debut album "Paradise in the Picturehouse" and the subsequent run of dates turned out to be one of the highest grossing tours in Ireland that year. In 2012 around 30,000 people turned out to see them play a concert in their old hometown of Galway city. In 2016 the band went back into the studio for the first time since the early nineties. '**Brighten up my Life**', the Stunning's first original single since 1993, was released in May 2017. Followed by an album in the autumn '**Twice Around the World**'.

Things have changed dramatically since their early days of constant touring - now the band has their fingers in several pies and the challenge is to find the time to play. Lead singer **Steve Wall** is also an actor and has just completed his first lead role, playing the legendary jazz musician **Chet Baker** in a new feature about his last days in Amsterdam. He has also appeared in shows such as **Vikings**, **Silent Witness (BBC)**, **Crossing Lines (Netflix)** and **Moone Boy**; **Joe Wall** teaches in BIMM Music College, Dublin; **Jim Higgins** is a much-in-demand bodhrán player, touring with folk-legend Christy Moore; **Derek Murray** works as a sound engineer with Tommy Tiernan, one of Irelands finest comedians, and **Cormac Dunne** is one of the most in-demand session drummers, playing with a host of acts, mostly west of the Shannon.