

TRADITIONAL MUSIC & SONG

# fomm

Vol. 2 No. 6 Summer 2024



ÓMOS CHARLIE LENNON



# about fonn

**fonn** is the Irish for an air or a tune. But it can also mean desire or enthusiasm. This magazine is enthusiastic about airs and tunes – traditional music and song. Our approach to traditional music and song is respectful. We respect those who work to preserve the tradition. Equally we respect those who explore the boundaries of the tradition by collaborating with musicians in other genres and styles. We believe in parity of esteem for both of these movements within traditional and folk music. They are complementary – not incompatible.

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Riverstown Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

# THE JAMES MORRISON TRADITIONAL music festival

The 32nd Year



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**Riverstown, Co. Sligo**  
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Best wishes for the festival from Riverstown Vintners and Riverstown Business Community

**OUR FRIDAY FESTIVAL LINEUP (2/8/24)**

- Official Opening Reception by Attracta Brady in Morrison Teach Ceoil @7:30pm
- Followed by The James Morrison Commemorative Concert @9pm featuring visiting young musicians, local musicians, singers and dancers from Bróga Bríomhar Dance School

**OUR SATURDAY FESTIVAL LINEUP (3/8/24)**

- The John Callaghan Memorial Sean Nós Dancing Competition @1pm in Riverstown Community Hall.
- Fiddle Workshop with Jason McGuinness @11am-12noon - all ages - no cover charge - Morrison Cottage, Riverstown
- Musical Tribute at the James Morrison Memorial Drumfin @6pm followed by a reception at the Sligo Folk Park @6:45pm.
- Singing Session led by Caitríona Ní Cheannabháin @7pm in Riverstown Community Hall
- Ceoil Agus Craic at the cottage @8-10pm led by Brian Mostyn
- Evening Sessions: The Festival Bar led by Keelan McGrath and Tommy Mac's bar led by Fergus Bogue.

**THIS SUNDAY FESTIVAL LINEUP (4/8/24)**

- Aifreann Na Féile in Riverstown Church @12:30pm
- Sunday Afternoon Céilí at the cottage @3-5pm with the Hernons & Don Stiffe featuring Joe McGorrian, Paul Moran, Rónán Ó Conghaile and Bróga Bríomhar Dance School dancers
- Kids Corner 2 hours of fun @3-5pm with John & Lucy Davey
- Junior Session @5-6:30pm in Riverstown Community Hall hosted by Lorraine Sweeney & Chloe McCann
- The commemorative address given by Anton McGowan in Teach Ceoil @7pm
- Evening Sessions: The Festival Bar led by Fergus Bogue and Tommy Mac's bar led by Aaron Glancy, Timmy Flaherty and Darren Culliney

**OUR MONDAY FESTIVAL LINEUP (5/8/24)**

- Closing Session @12 noon in The Festival Bar, Riverstown





**The Original Masked Singers**  
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**Rhiannon key for YRAS Conference**  
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## grace notes



▲ **Master piper:** The great Johnny Doran (1908-1950) – who brought music throughout Ireland – but especially around Clare.

## Johnny Doran statue proposed by Keenan

**P**iping maestro, Paddy Keenan (*below*) has proposed that the master piper, Johnny Doran, should be honoured with a statue in Miltown Malbay.

Keenan's proposal came in the aftermath of Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy last month.

Although Doran was born in Rathnew in Co. Wicklow in 1908, Paddy Keenan believes that Miltown Malbay would be an appropriate site for a memorial since Doran was not only the pivotal figure in the development of the great piper, Willie

Clancy, but was also a very popular visitor to Clare.

On one such visit to the Miltown races in 1936, he was seen and heard by Willie Clancy, who was so impressed by the instrument and its player that he and his friend, Martin Talty, followed Doran around the county – absorbing the music and the technique of the piping legend.

In 1938 Clancy bought his first set of pipes from Doran's brother, Felix. Within a decade Clancy won the Oireachtas piping competition in 1947.

It was almost as if the baton had been passed on – for by 1950 Doran was dead, aged 42.

Almost presciently in 1947, Clare fiddler, John Kelly, arranged with Kevin Danaher of the Irish Folklore Commission to record Doran on acetate disks. Those recordings were subsequently re-mastered by Harry Bradshaw and issued as an album by Na Píobairí Uilleann as Volume 1 in its Master Pipers series. <https://shop.pipers.ie/products/master-pipers-vol-1-johnny-doran>



▲ **Fiddler of Oriel:** Tomás Ó Ceallaigh accepts the unique Fiddle of Oriel trophy from Mike Treanor of Mullan Lighting, the event sponsor.

## Tomás is this year's Fiddler of Oriel

**M**ullaghmore fiddler, Tomás Ó Ceallaigh, is the new Fiddler of Oriel. He was selected for the award at Féile Oriel in Monaghan in early May by adjudicators, Eimear Arkins and Attracta Brady.

Tomás, who is a member of the Ring of Gullion Branch of Comhaltas, where he has been mentored by Bernie Muckian, won the over 18s competition, while Clodagh Crowley from Lackagh in Co. Galway won the under 18 title.

Tomás comes from a musical family: his sisters Aoife and Niamh are both fiddle players. He finished second in the senior fiddle slow air competition at last year's Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Mullingar. This was accom-

panied by a second place in the senior Trios competition.

The QUB student also teaches the fiddle in Mullaghbawn, where he also provides tuition on the piano and tin whistle.

This year's Féile also honoured six more pillars of traditional fiddling for their lifetime commitment to the music – following the successful inauguration of its Elders of Fiddling awards in 2023.

This recipients for 2024 were Séamus Connolly (USA), Charlie Lennon (Connacht), Antoin Mac Gabhann (Leinster), Benny McHugh (UK), Kathleen Nesbitt (Munster) and Eithne Vallyley (Ulster).

The award for Charlie Lennon of course, proved to be a bitter-sweet honour – since less than five weeks later, Charlie had died.



## Irish set dancing listed on heritage inventory

Set dancing was recently given formal State recognition as one of four cultural practices to be added to the list of Ireland's living cultural heritage.

The Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin, announced that Irish set dancing – along with Gaelic Football (Men's and Women's), the Irish amateur dramatic tradition and St. Brigid's Cross weaving – would join 38 other cultural practices already recognised on Ireland's National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

### Ireland's Intangible Cultural Heritage

#### IRISH SET DANCING



An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán  
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media



The aim of the National Inventory is to protect, promote and celebrate Irish living cultural heritage practices, customs, crafts and traditions. It is maintained in line with the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

"Each of these practices," said Minister Catherine Martin,

"is integral to the culture and identity of the communities who practice them, and to our society more broadly."

"Dancers throughout Ireland and in countries all over the world will be delighted at the news that Ireland has recognised Irish set-dancing as an invaluable part of our shared global heritage," said Terry

Moylan of Brooks Academy – the set dancing school which operates out of the NPU Headquarters in Henrietta Street, Dublin).

## UCC music scholarship

The Music Department in UCC is offering Sydney V. Regan Scholarships – worth €3000 – for students starting one of the Taught Masters Programmes available in the Department in Autumn 2024.

These programmes are MA in Irish Traditional Music; MA in Music and Cultural History; MA in Experimental Sound Practice; and MA in Ethnomusicology).

As required by the Sydney V. Regan Bequest, every candidate for a scholarship must have been born in Ireland, be of a parent who was born in Ireland or have been ordinarily resident in Ireland for at least ten years.

The award of the scholarship is contingent on the student being accepted to the relevant Taught Masters programme. So applicants should first apply for the relevant programme on [www.ucc.ie/apply](http://www.ucc.ie/apply).

Applicants should then complete and submit the Sydney V. Regan MA Scholarships Application Form before the deadline of 5pm on Friday, August 9. For more information contact [music@ucc.ie](mailto:music@ucc.ie).

## SYDNEY V. REGAN MA SCHOLARSHIPS

VALUED AT  
€3000

MUSIC

MA IN IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC  
MA IN MUSIC AND CULTURAL HISTORY  
MA IN EXPERIMENTAL SOUND PRACTICE  
MA IN ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

CONTACT [MUSIC@UCC.IE](mailto:music@ucc.ie) FOR MORE



School of  
Film, Music  
and Theatre





▲ Restored to full working order: The iconic Macha mask with (from left) *Repair Shop* expert, Sarah Hatton, Anne Hart and Dara Vallely of Armagh Rhymers, and *Repair Shop* host, Jay Blades (Photo: BBC).

## Rhymers made up after Macha mask is made good

The Armagh Rhymers celebrated the return of their beloved Macha horse mask recently following its restoration by willow artist, Sarah Hatton, on BBC TV's popular programme, *The Repair Shop*.

The show uses expert craftspeople to restore a wide range of artifacts brought in by members of the public – while at the same time reflecting on the memories and back stories associated with them.

The Rhymers' Artistic Director, Dara Vallely, and Director, Anne Hart (who is also the performer behind the Macha mask), visited the *Repair Shop* Barn in West Sussex with Macha, who was in great need of expert attention.

Made by Armagh craftsman, James Mulholland in the 1970s, the beautiful mask was named after the horse goddess, Macha – from whom Armagh/Ard Mhacha gets its name – and represents the shapeshifting Celtic goddess and queen.

However, the intricate willow weaved headpiece was showing signs of age – its ears were detached causing significant damage to the top of the head.

Without expert intervention the mask would have been almost certainly had to be retired permanently from performance to save it from further damage.

*The Repair Shop's* willow specialist, Sarah Hatton, expertly completed the intricate and delicate repairs to restore the mask to its former glory – blending the restored areas seamlessly with James Mulholland's original work.

"Macha is a particular favourite with our younger audiences who are often genuinely shocked to discover there is a real human underneath," said Anne Hart.

"Thanks to Sarah and the *Repair Shop* team, Macha will now be able to delight audiences for at least another fifty years."



▲ Rhyme Time: Members of the Armagh Rhymers.



▲ Tara Boyle

## NPU piping scholarships awarded

**N**a Píobairí Uilleann (NPU) has announced the winners of the recipients of this year's Piping Scholarships – which may be used to avail of tuition from a number of participating summer schools.

NPU reports that there were numerous applications this year – all of a very high standard. Unsuccessful applicants have been strongly encouraged to apply again next year.

The successful applicants for this year are:

- Tara Boyle (*Galway*)
- Cuan Breathnach (*Galway*)
- Fionn Crean Mac Oireachtaigh (*Wicklow*)
- Michaela Feeney (*Clare*)
- Eoghan McGovern (*Cavan*)
- Róisín McNamara (*Meath*)
- Cormac Ó Mordha (*Dublin*)
- Cóilín O'Reilly (*Galway*).

Successful recipients can use their scholarship to avail of tuition at any of these summer schools:

- Scoil Samraidh Willie Clancy, Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare
- South Sligo Summer School, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo
- Joe Mooney Summer School, Drumshambo, Co. Leitrim
- Scoil Acla, Achill Island, Co. Mayo
- Ceol na Coille, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
- Catskills Irish Arts Week, East Durham, New York.





▲ **Keynote speaker:** double GRAMMY award winner, Rhiannon Giddens

## Rhiannon to deliver keynote Killarney roots conference

Double GRAMMY award winner, Rhiannon Giddens, will give the keynote address at the annual Your Roots Are Showing (YRAS) folk conference in Killarney next January.

Recognised by the Recording Academy as a member of the Carolina Chocolate Drops, Rhiannon won a second award for her collaboration with Francesco Turrisi. She has also been widely acclaimed for her human rights activism.

Based in Limerick, Rhiannon tours extensively in the US and Europe. She has also garnered acclaim as a composer with works including a ballet score.

After two previous YRAS conferences in Monaghan and Dundalk, the five-day event will run at the Gleneagle Hotel in Killarney from January 15-19.



## Cooney's return to Peterloo

Later this month, English singer-songwriter, Seán Cooney of The Young'uns, is due to premiere a new show about the Peterloo Massacre of 1819, *Peter's Field*, in which he will be joined by singers, Eliza Carthy and Sam Carter.

*Peter's Field* features fifteen new songs based on hundreds of eye witness accounts of one of the most momentous days in the history of the English working class when 60,000 people marched to Manchester for a peaceful rally for parliamentary reform – when they were attacked by mounted soldiers, killing eighteen people and injuring hundreds more.

Sam Carter has described the show as “something with the flavour of the *Radio Ballads* [created by Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger, and Charles Parker in 1958] with songs and story-telling interwoven with personal accounts from the event.”

*Peter's Field* is the second show on the theme of the Peterloo Massacre to flow from the pen of Seán Cooney. He was also a

key contributor to the *Peterloo* 2019 project, which aimed to link historical imagery with contemporary themes.

After a successful opening, the highly acclaimed show was put on an extended hiatus following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Five years later, Seán Cooney has a new opportunity to revisit the iconic event in song.



## NPU plans international piping day

International Uilleann Piping Day will take place on Saturday November 2.

This is a worldwide day of piping activity co-ordinated by Na Piobairí Uilleann (NPU) – aimed at raising awareness and celebrating this iconic Irish instrument.

Events – including ‘try the pipes’ workshops, sessions and recitals will be held online or in person. Full details will be available on <https://pipers.ie>

Anyone interested in getting involved or hosting an event should contact [info@pipers.ie](mailto:info@pipers.ie).



**Gigs for Gaza**

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**Making the Gramam**

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**on beat**

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# THE LONG GRAZING ACRE

## TRAVELLER MUSIC TRADITIONS RE-IMAGINED

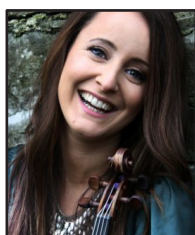
**T**he Long Grazing Acre was a unique and captivating two-week journey from Boyle to Fintown through Roscommon, Leitrim and Donegal on traditional horse-drawn wagons. The musical odyssey was led by master uilleann pipers Paddy Keenan and Mickey Dunne, and Mickey's daughter, Niamh.

In a tribute to their Traveller forebears, Paddy and Mickey, accompanied by family members and musical friends, relived and reimagined the experiences and traditions of Irish Traveller musicians.

As the horse drawn wagons meandered along scenic routes in the three counties, it offered a glimpse into a world of Travellers and their interaction with local communities, where their arrival had always been eagerly anticipated.

Acclaimed traditional performers – including Matt Molloy, Gerry 'Fiddle' O'Connor, Cathy Jordan, Séamie O'Dowd, John Carty, Liam Kelly, Dermot Byrne, Siobhán Butler, Dee Armstrong, Trish Reilly, Eamon de Barra and Seán Óg Graham – along with local musicians in each

▲ **Music by the Campfire:** (Photo: Tommy Fegan).



▲ Niamh Dunne

town and village on the route, turned out night after night to welcome the travelling performers. Hospitality was forthcoming at every location, ensuring rest and comfort for the musicians and their supporters.

Window displays and presentations on the history of Traveller musicians and their impact on traditional music enabled local communities to engage in conversations, recalling visits by the famous Doran brothers – Johnny and Felix – and other Traveller families.

The musical performances, led by Paddy, Mickey and Niamh at the various camps were the highlight of the fourteen-day journey.

Paddy's vision for the event – developed in collaboration with the indefatigable Anna Legge – was inspired by the Long Grazing Acre, which is of special significance for Travellers, with its social, economic and cultural dimensions.

The economic benefits flow from the opportunity to graze animals, including horses, which were pivotal to Travellers' nomadic way of life. This enabled Travellers to engage in work which sustained their livelihoods. It was, therefore, crucial to their very

▲ **Principals:** Paddy Keenan (left) and Mickey Dunne in Roscommon (Photo: Tommy Fegan).

existence. The shared space provided by this strip of land also offered opportunities for socialising, inter-generational sharing of values and traditions, thus preserving their heritage.

It has, therefore, been essential to the social way of life and symbolic of Travellers' determination to maintain that way of life for as long as possible. It has also often become a point of conflict with the authorities recently as Travellers have exerted their right to this patch of precious land without success.

Changes in local by-laws, management policies, practices and enforced assimilation generated conflicts with the local communities, and the Acre has also been symbolic of that conflict.

Behind all the performers who contributed to the success of the venture were the logistics team of Terry and Mikey McEnerney – who were responsible for managing the horses and wagons throughout the journey.

The event was sponsored by the Arts Council and by Roscommon, Leitrim and Donegal County Councils.



**T**he Basic Income for Artists (BIA) – launched as a pilot by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in the Republic – has received overwhelmingly positive findings in the impact assessment carried out after one year of operation. Among the participants in the pilot are a number of traditional singers and musicians.

In their report published in May, researchers, Nadia Feldkircher and Brian O'Donnell, made a number of important findings.

“One year into the pilot, research suggests that the BIA payment is having a consistent, positive impact on almost all indicators; positively impacting practice development, sectoral retention, well-being, and lessening deprivation,” commented Minister for Tourism, Culture and Arts, Catherine Martin.

“BIA recipients are spending more time on their art practice per week, less time working in other sectors, are more likely to be able to sustain themselves through arts work alone and are suffering less from depression and anxiety.”

**A**ccording to the report, each week BIA recipients spend in total 8 hours more than the control group on their creative practice, including:

- 3.5 weekly hours more making work;
- 2 weekly hours more on research and experimentation;
- 1 hour more on management and administration; and
- more than half an hour weekly on training.

Each month BIA recipients also invest €550 more than the control group in their practice, namely on equipment and materials, advertising and marketing, workspaces and work travel.

Unsurprisingly BIA recipients make ends meet more easily than the control group and are more likely to afford basic items.

Secondly the report found that BIA recipients spend 2.7 weekly hours less than the control group working in a sector other than the arts. BIA recipients are less likely than the control group to name “low pay” or “lack of jobs or clients” as reasons for their inability to work in the arts.



## PROGRESS ON BASIC INCOME FOR ARTISTS

### ONE-YEAR IMPACT ASSESSMENT IS POSITIVE

Thirdly the report found that BIA recipients are more likely to have completed new works in the previous six months. On average they have completed 3.6 pieces of new work more than the control group.

Finally, BIA recipients were found to have a higher life satisfaction compared to the control group. At the same time, they are less likely to have felt depressed or

anxious compared to the control group.

At this point in the pilot project the researchers have found no impact on the prevalence of unpaid work in the arts, the price of commissions, the likelihood to apply for arts funding or the prevalence of artistic residencies.

**P**articipants for the pilot were chosen by an anonymous randomised selection process. Over 8,000 applicants were deemed eligible under the scheme's criteria and all eligible applicants were included in the selection process.

A cohort of 2,000 applicants was assigned to the Treatment Group who have received weekly payments of €325 while another 1,000-strong cohort was assigned to the Control Group who received no additional supports but continued to co-operate with data collection to facilitate the impact assessment.

The BIA pilot scheme is set to continue for three years in total – when a comprehensive report will assess its impact over a much longer period.

► “Looking at the early findings of this pilot, a compelling case is already emerging from to justify rolling out this basic income to all artists... This is my absolute goal” – **Catherine Martin, Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.**





▼ On record: Eliza and Martin Carthy.



## ARTS BODIES WANT BASIC INCOME SCHEME EXTENDED

The positive assessment of the first year of the Basic Income for Artists pilot scheme in the Republic has prompted a number of arts bodies to launch a petition on the British social activism website, [change.org](https://change.org), to seek the retention, extension and expansion of the Irish Government-funded scheme.

Campaigning under the title of Artist Resource Organisations, the arts bodies – which include First Contact Music, the Performing Arts Forum and Poetry Ireland – argue that “by retaining the programme and expanding it further, we can ensure that our artists and arts workers continue contributing their creativity towards enriching our culture while also securing their livelihoods.”

Among the other organisations who have shared links to the petition are Music Network, National Campaign for the Arts, Irish Theatre Institute, Contemporary Music Centre, Improvised Music Company, as well as a number of individuals.



## MARTIN CARTHY PLANS TO RECORD NEW ALBUM

### PROJECT AIMS TO COMMIT STAGE SHOW TO DISC

British folk legend, Martin Carthy, is working on a new album – twenty years after his last solo album and six years after *Anchor*, the family album he made with his daughter, Eliza, and his late lamented wife, Norma Waterson.

The proposed new album, *East*, celebrates the traditional music, poetry, dance and song of the east coast of England – with tales of mystery, wolves and poachers, where the dead speak to each other.

A unique group of musicians, actors and dancers has agreed to bring Martin’s artistic vision to life.

The *East* project has received commitments from producer, Jim Sutherland (La Banda Europa, Shoglenifty, Aberfeldy, Disney’s *Brave*, Salmon Fishing in the Yemen), musicians Sheema Mukherjee on sitar and voice, Barney Morse-Brown aka Duotone on cello, voice and electronics, Ewan Wardrop (Matthew Bourne’s Ballet Boyz, Ukelele Orchestra of Great Britain, Formby) on body percussion, ukelele and voice; and award-winning actress Miranda Richardson.



▲ Miranda Richardson

First commissioned by the Norfolk and Norwich festival and staged in Brighton, Hull, Bewdley and Hartlepool since, *East* has grown into a moving and uplifting show, which is now to be recorded as an album – subject to the success of a crowd-funding campaign by Martin and his daughter, Eliza.

In their crowd-funding appeal, Eliza and Martin note:

“As Martin is 83, we feel an urgency to act now, and are reaching out to you in our community to see if you would consider being a part of our beautiful work.

“We are offering a free download of the album and your name credited as part of the project. By mid-September 2024 we hope to have enough to pay the team to record, and to self-release when the time is right.

“Any donation, of any amount is welcome! But you can if you’re not able to splash, buy us a coffee for £5.”

So if you wish to share in Martin Carthy’s history and legacy, check out the Ko-fi website: <https://ko-fi.com/Post/EAST-Be-a-part-of-Martin-Carthy-history-and-leg-BOB110FCIB>



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on beat:  
gig for gaza

# GIG FOR GAZA



**THURSDAY**  
**26TH SEPT, 2024**  
**LIBERTY HALL THEATRE,**  
**DUBLIN**

Doors open at 7pm



Tickets €25  
Available on Eventbrite,  
scan the QR code.

with

Damien Dempsey

Roisin El Cherif

Jim Page

Mona El Farra

Stephen Rea

Maighread and  
Triona Ní Dhomhnaill,  
Paddy Glackin,  
Sean Potts



PROCEEDS TO MIDDLE EAST CHILDRENS ALLIANCE





## WEXFORD READY FOR FLEADH FIESTA

**T**raditional musicians, singers and dancers will gather in Wexford from August 4-11 for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2024.

Organised by Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann (CCÉ) the Fleadh consists of two major elements:

- the competitive: to determine the All-Ireland champions in various traditional music, singing and dance events according to various age categories – and
- the non-competitive: including an array of concerts and recitals, sessions, book and album launches, workshops and talks.

As always, the programme of concerts and recitals boasts an impressive line-up of musicians and performers from the traditional and folk music genres.

While the Fleadh showcases a plethora of Irish-based performers, it is noteworthy that a number of performers who are normally based beyond these shores will be on stage in Wexford.

Apart from the specific international showcase concert featuring

▲ **Lankum:** (from left) Cormac Mac Diarmada, Radie Peat, Daragh Lynch and Ian Lynch

CCÉ members from around the globe, well established bands like Cherish the Ladies (based in USA) and Talisk (based in Scotland) will appear as well as Julie Fowlis and Éamon Doorley (based in Scotland) who will join Zoë Conway, John McIntyre and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra for a special *Éire is Alba* concert.

The Fleadh will also see a rare appearance by the Rowsome Quartet – the foursome of master pipers made up of Dubliners, Kevin Rowsome, Nollaig Mac Cárthaigh



► **Piping master:** Leo Rowsome

and Mick O'Brien with Mark Redmond (from Gorey in Co. Wexford) – who will not only recreate the sound of the original quartet formed by Leo Rowsome and his brother, Tom, but also honour the Rowsome family's Wexford heritage: as Leo and Tom's father, William, hailed from Ballintore, near Ferns.

Another highlight of the Fleadh's concert programme will be a special memorial concert in honour of Séamus Mac Mathúna from Cooraclear in Co. Clare, who died in 2020. An all-star cast made up of many friends of the CCÉ's first Timire will play and sing in tribute to their late comrade who was not only a source of inspiration to so many traditional artists but also an energetic and creative organiser within Comhaltas. The depth of talent on stage promises an event that will match the musical excellence of the performers with a heartfelt emotional intensity.

*In the following pages, we offer a guide to the major concerts at this year's Fleadh as well as the singing sessions – along with other Fleadh-related news.*





## Tuesday, August 6:

**Ceiliúradh Music Generation** – featuring Reel-Nua Intermediate Trad Ensemble; Reel Óg Junior Trad Ensemble; Waterford Intermediate Ensemble; Tradoodle; Yellow Bellows; and Waterford Harp Ensemble. *Wexford Credit Union Dome 3pm.*



**Ceiliúradh Music Generation** – featuring Nasc: Music Generation Tipperary and Kilkenny Trad Ensemble; National Harp Collective; Waterford Senior Ensemble; Reelig (*above*); Clonroche Traveller Girls; Music Generation Laois, Carlow, Waterford and Wexford Trad Ensemble. *Wexford Credit Union Dome 7pm*



## Wednesday, August 7:

**Who Am I Now?** presented by community artists, Tranquillity, featuring music by Tulua (*above*). *National Opera House - Jerome Hynes Theatre, 7.30pm.*



## Thursday, August 8:

**International Showcase Concert** with contributions from CCÉ branches in Australia, Britain, North America, Singapore and Dubai. *National Opera House - O'Reilly Theatre, 7pm.*



**GARADICE:** *National Opera House - Jerome Hynes Theatre, 7.30pm.*



**CHERISH THE LADIES:** *National Opera House - Wexford Credit Union Dome 8pm.*

**Meitheal Concert:** featuring young musicians from the Ennis and Limerick Meitheal summer school with Lisa Canny and Stephen Doherty. *Presentation Concert Hall, 8pm.*



**SEOID:** *St. Iberius Church 8pm.*

**So Say So** – poetry event curated by Stephen James Smith. *Wexford Arts Centre 8pm*



## Friday, August 9:

**ÍMAR:** *Clayton White's Hotel, 7pm.*

**FLANAGAN BROTHERS AWARD CONCERT:** honouring Séamus Egan. *St. Iberius Church 8pm.*

**MONSTER CÉILÍ** – featuring Taobh na Mara Céilí Band (Dungarvan) and Pipers Cross Céilí Band (Mayo). *Wexford Credit Union Dome 8pm*





**NATIONAL FOLK ORCHESTRA:**  
*National Opera House - O'Reilly Theatre, 8pm.*



**MAURICE LENNON TRIO:** *National Opera House - Jerome Hynes Theatre, 9.00pm.*

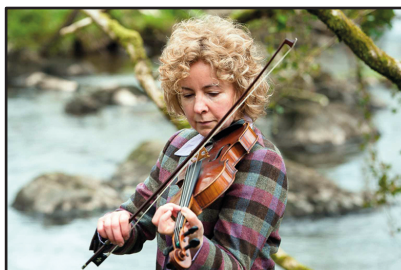


**Saturday, August 10:**  
**JOHN SPILLANE:** *Wexford Arts Centre 8pm.*



**Séamus Mac Mathúna**  
(Photo from the Mick O'Connor collection).

**SÉAMUS MacMATHÚNA CONCERT:** featuring Bríd Harper (*below*), Oisín Mac Diarmada, Louise Mulcahy, Tom Doorley, Aoife Granville, Conal Ó Grada, Clann Mhic Mhathúna, Connie O'Connell, The Tunney Family, Rita Gallagher, Clann Mhic Gabhann, Máire Ní Cheilleachair, Eamon Cotter, Eoin Kenny, Paudie O'Connor, Denis Liddy, The Fennell Dancers, Roisín Chambers, Danny Maidhici Ó Suilleabháin, Daire Bracken, Frank Kelly, Mícheál agus MacDara Ó Raghallaigh, Clann Uí Laoire, Emma agus Sarah-Jane Woods, Clare Walsh, Marcas Ó Murchú, Kim Fleming, Michelle O'Sullivan, Aoife Ní Chaoimh, Mícheál Ó hAlmháin, Senan Lillis and many more. *Wexford Credit Union Dome 8pm.*



**THE ROWSOME QUARTET:** featuring Nollaig Mac Cárthaigh, Mick O'Brien, Mark Redmond and Kevin Rowsome. *St. Iberius Church 8pm.*



**ÉIRE IS ALBA:** featuring Zoë Conway, John McIntyre, Julie Fowles and Éamon Doorley with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra (conductor: David Brophy). *National Opera House - O'Reilly Theatre, 9pm.*



**FRANKIE GAVIN AND DE DANNAN:**  
*Presentation Concert Hall, 9pm.*

**Sunday, August 11:**  
**SENIOR CÉILÍ BAND COMPETITION:**  
*Wexford Credit Union, Dome, 8pm.*



▲ **Piper's Cross Céilí Band:** last year's All-Ireland senior champions based in Knock in Co. Mayo.





▲ Paddy Berry and Aileen Lambert from Wexford



▲ Seán Faulkner of Drogheda

## SINGING SESSIONS AT THE FLEADH

**A**t this year's Fleadh in Wexford there will be no shortage of opportunities for those who wish to sing socially (as opposed to competitively) or indeed to listen to others sing.

On four days of the Fleadh there will be at least nine hours of singing – all taking place in the Festival Room in the National Opera House in High Street as singing circles from all over the island take a turn in hosting a session.

There will also be a five-hour marathon farewell session in Mary's Bar on Monday for those suffering Fleadh withdrawal symptoms who may find it difficult to extract themselves from Wexford.

The full singing programme is as follows:

### Thursday, August 8:

**Young Singers' Session:** Bean a' Tí: Aileen Lambert. 12pm-2pm

**Wexford Singers' Session:** Fear a' Tí: Phil Berry. 2pm-4pm

**Stone Fiddle Book Launch and Songs:** Fear a' Tí: John Tunney. 6pm-8pm

**Open Session:** Bean a' Tí: Marianne McAleer. 8pm-12am

### Friday, August 9:

**Limerick Singers' Session:** Bean a' Tí: Kara O'Brien. 12pm-2pm

**North Wexford Singers' Session:** Bean a' Tí: Rachel Uí Fhaoláin. 2pm-4pm

**Sing a Song for Paddy:** Fear a' Tí: Paddy Berry. 7pm-8pm

**Open Session:** Fear a' Tí: Vivian Molloy. 8pm-12am

**Saturday, August 10:**  
**Walking Song Tour of Wexford Town:** led by John O'Byrne. 10am-11.30m (Meet at Wexford Arts Centre at 9.45am)

**Wexford Singers' Session:** Fear a' Tí: John O'Byrne. 12pm-2pm

**Cork Singers' Session:** Fear a' Tí: Jim Walsh. 2pm-4pm

**Ulster Singers' Session:** Fear a' Tí: Tommy Dunne 7pm-8pm

**Open Session:** Fear a' Tí: Séamus Brogan. 8pm-12am

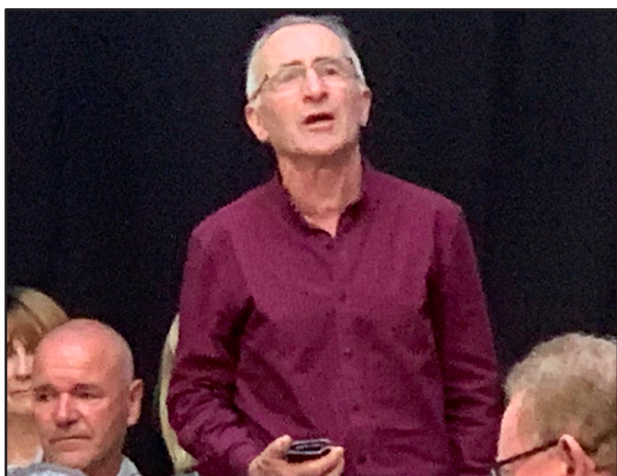
**Sunday, August 11:**  
**Belfast Singers' Session:** Fear a' Tí: Stephen Connor. 12pm-2pm

**Drogheda Singers' Session:** Fear a' Tí: Seán Faulkner. 2pm-4pm

**Music Generation Session:** Clonroche Traveller Girls 7pm-8pm

**Open Session:** Fear a' Tí: Micheál Marrinan. 8pm-12am

**Monday, August 12:**  
**Farewell Session in Mary's Bar:** Fear a' Tí: Gavin Byrne. 2pm-7pm



▲ Micheál Marrinan from Waterford



▲ Kara O'Brien from Limerick





▲ Ard Ollamh 2024, Domhnall de Barra

## BARDS AND LIFERS

Aside from competition and performance, each Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann also provides an opportunity for Comhaltas to recognise those who have made an outstanding contribution to traditional music and song – either as performers or as long-term activists engaged in the promotion and development of the music.

In the former category – the performers – Comhaltas gives a Bardic award to those who are considered to have made an exceptional and unique contribution as instrumentalists, singers or dancers. The honourees are typically masters of their particular art (frequently past All-Ireland winners).

In the latter category – the activists (who often also have a pedigree as performers) are recognised in the presentation of the Ard Ollamh award and as of this year, a new award for Lifetime Achievement.



▲ Deirdre Collis

This year, the five recipients of the Bardic awards are:

- multi-instrumentalist, Deirdre Collis (Sligo);
- singer Vincent Crowley (Cork);
- fiddler Brid Harper (Donegal);
- piper Mark Redmond (Wexford); and
- flute player Sarah Jane Woods (Dublin).

The Ard Ollamh award goes to Domhnall de Barra, from Athea, Co. Limerick, who, as well as being a highly acclaimed multi-instrumentalist and singer as a member of the renowned Liverpool Céilí Band, has also served two terms as Uachtarán, CCÉ.

The inaugural Lifetime Achievement award is to be presented to Wexford's Paddy Berry, an All-Ireland champion singer, lilter and whistler – as well as being a respected collector of songs (especially ballads from Wexford).

All of the awards are to be presented during the Fleadh in Wexford.



▲ Sarah Jane Woods



▲ World record attempt set for home of Wexford GAA,

## WHISTLERS TO BID FOR WORLD RECORD

Comhaltas is organising an attempt to break the Guinness World Record for the largest group playing tin whistles continuously over a five minute period.

The bid to break the current record of 1,200 is set for Thursday August 8 during Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann when Comhaltas is inviting tin whistle players of all ages

to join the bid to make history. The monster ensemble will play two tunes: *The Boys of Wexford* and *The Dawning of the Day March*.

Would-be worldly whistlers are being requested to register at Chadwicks Wexford Park – the home of Wexford GAA – at 4.30pm on August 8 in order to be ready to play at 5.00pm.

**Comhaltas**

**50<sup>th</sup> Scoil Eigse**

..... Scoil Shamhraidh Bhliantúil Idimáisiúnta an Chomhaltais .....  
 Summer School where Emerging Talent is encouraged and guided by the Cream of Irish Traditional Artists in a wonderful hothouse of respect for tradition, innovation, creativity and encouragement for fifty years

**4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> August**  
**WEXFORD 2024**



The publication of the Irish Traditional Music Archive's annual report not only offers an update on the remarkable breadth of activities undertaken by the organisation over the last year – but also lends itself to a consideration of its broader trajectory since 2023 marked the conclusion of its ambitious five-year strategic plan (2019–2023).

The Archive has two essential tasks – firstly identifying and preserving material for posterity; and secondly making the material available for further research and engagement leading to public performance and transmission.

Pivotal to both elements of ITMA's mission has been the development of the organisation's digital infrastructure – which has not only enhanced its capacity to preserve and store material but has also launched a new website to enable more effective public access to the deposits in the archive.

The Annual Report notes that the Government of Ireland's Shared Island Initiative' has provided €250,000 to fund a state-of-the-art digitisation studio with associated digital storage and digital preservation suites. These facilities will underpin the largest digital collection of Irish traditional music, song and dance in the world under management systems aligning with international best practice.

The report also highlights an investment of €40,000 in a new website, which can host the large tranches of new archival material which will become digitally accessible in the archive in the next five years.

"ITMA will continue to grow its digital offering as we increasingly prioritise our services to remote users," explained Director Liam O'Connor. "We want to democratise access to the physical archival



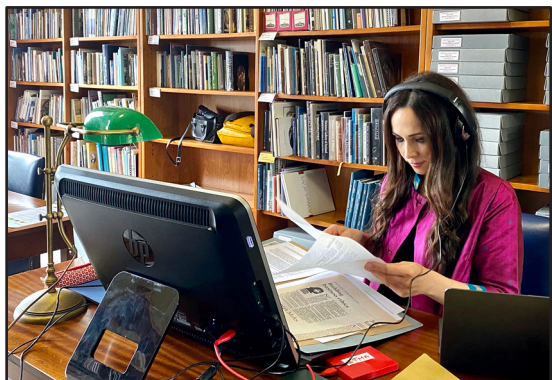
## Ó NEART GO NEART

### ITMA REPORTS CONTINUING SUCCESS



▲ ITMA Director  
Liam O'Connor

▼ Piper and flute player  
Louise Mulcahy consults the Liam O'Flynn collection at ITMA.



material we hold in Merrion Square by making as much material as accessible as possible to as many people as possible.

"While anyone can visit ITMA's Library at 73 Merrion Square without an appointment or invitation, and while we do not have any pay-wall barriers or membership fees, I am personally conscious that only a small number of privileged visitors can actually attend ITMA's premises in Dublin during working hours, Monday to Friday.

"The number of in-person visitors pales in comparison to the number of people who access our digital services worldwide from the comfort of their homes at times that suit their own personal schedule."

As well as encouraging public engagement with the archive through in-person visits and internet access, another major development in recent years has been the expansion in creative engagement by artists.

While the archive has always been available as a resource for contemporary performers, ITMA has pursued a deliberate policy of inviting and, even, commissioning artists to engage in creative projects.

"With more than 150 artists engaged every year," said Liam O'Connor, "ITMA's spend on artists' fees has grown exponentially over the course of this Strategy." The

report lists a total spend of €215,460 on artists' fees in 2023 – covering a total of 212 artists.

Artist engagement with ITMA often generates further material for inclusion in the archive. The Annual Report notes that field recording in 2023 saw unprecedented numbers of in-depth interviews – totalling over 130 interviews with artists throughout the year as part of field recording initiatives as well as ITMA's *Drawing from the Well*, *Saoithe* and *Taoscadh ón Tobar* projects.

ITMA also continued to collect and lend a platform to minorities within the tradition through projects such as the Thomas McCarthy Song Collecting Project and its partnership in *Trad is Amach*.

Among the many collections entrusted to the care of the archive during 2023, the Report highlights the acquisition of the Cullinane Archive Collection – an extensive multimedia collection of material relating to the history of Irish dance compiled by Dr John Cullinane over his lifetime. In an agreement reached between ITMA and An Coimisiún Le Rincí Gaelacha, the collection has been placed on deposit in the archive where it will be preserved, organised and made available on behalf of CLRG.



**E**fforts to combat the media's underrepresentation of women and other minorities in Ireland have been boosted by the recent launch of a new strategy for Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion by Ireland's broadcasting and social media regulator, Coimisiún na Meán.

The strategy, which is the first of its kind for the industry, aims to foster a culture of equality and inclusivity in the media and is the result of extensive work by Coimisiún na Meán over the past number of years incorporating wide consultation with key sectoral representatives, including those working within the media sector.

Among the key objectives of the strategy are:

- achieving a more accurate representation of Irish society both on-air and off-air;
- the development and implementation of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) standards across media content;
- the collection, monitoring and publication of EDI data by public service media;
- the development of diversity education and training;
- the promotion of more equitable employment opportunities; and
- the removal of barriers to accessibility in the sector.

Coimisiún na Meán's Media Development Commissioner, Rónán Ó Domhnaill, said:

"The publication of a Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for the media sector in Ireland is an important step towards ensuring that our audio and audio-visual media sector is accessible, inclusive, diverse and representative of contemporary Ireland. An Coimisiún will continue to encourage initiatives to enhance the diversity of the media sector in Ireland and through our own sectoral development and funding schemes, will support activities aimed at making the media sector in Ireland more inclusive."

The strategy has also been welcomed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin, as a key step towards ensuring the media industry is accessible, inclusive and representative of our society.

"A diverse and inclusive media sector is essential for our society, for our democracy and for our cultural development. It is vital that our media reflects the many and varied voices of our society," she said.

"This strategy represents the first step of a longer-term process to address the far-reaching societal issues we face such as gender equality, the portrayal of negative stereotypes and the barriers to access and opportunity. This strategy will work towards ensuring a more equal media landscape and one which provides a diversity and a plurality of voices to our national discourse, boosts opportunities within the sector and reflects the society it represents."

The strategy has also been welcomed by FairPlé – the campaign for gender equity in folk and traditional music – describing it as "a significant milestone for all." FairPlé also congratulated the *Why Not Her?* collective and all the other progressive groups and individuals who took part in the consultations that led to the formulation of the strategy.

During the consultation period, the *Why Not Her?* collective produced a timely analysis of gender and racial representation within the top twenty most popular songs by domestic Irish artists on radio stations in Ireland in the year up to June 1, 2024; as well as considering the top five songs played on each station during the twelve-month period.

Based on its research, the collective questions why modern Irish female musicians are underrepresented on Irish radio. "Why do Irish radio gatekeepers tend to promote new male Irish artists over contemporary female artists?"

This is all the more surprising, argues the collective, since female artists have achieved significant milestones such as sold-out tours, international media appearances, and partnerships/signings with major labels, despite not getting remotely the same air-time. "Are there valid justifications for these practices to exclude Irish women from major radio playlists?" they ask.

Answers to these and other questions should be forthcoming as the new strategy is implemented.





**Ed REAVY**  
TRADITIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

# Ed REAVY

INTERNATIONAL  
FIDDLER OF THE YEAR



**Sat Oct 19th 2024**

TownHall Theatre, Cavan

**Junior Competition (U-18) - 11am**

**Senior Competition - 2 pm**



**CAVANTOWNCOMHALTAS.IE**

Entry via

**Eventbrite**



**EdReavyTradFest**



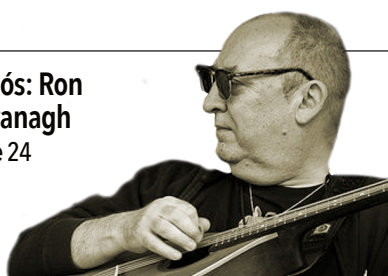
Under 18 Entry



Over 18 Entry



**Ómos: Heather Wood**  
Page 23



**Ómos: Ron Kavanagh**  
Page 24

## legacy

# ÓMÓS: CHARLIE LENNON

The remarkable fiddler, pianist and composer, Charlie Lennon, passed away in June – after a wonderfully rich and productive life in many genres of traditional music as a performer, teacher and composer – in various formats from solos, duos and small groups right through to céilí bands and major symphony orchestras,

Fiddler, pianist and composer Charlie Lennon came from Kiltyclogher, Co. Leitrim, on the border with Fermanagh where he grew up in a music-rich home environment.

Aged 7, he began taking piano lessons with Teresa Gilmartin – progressing through the grade examinations of the Royal Irish Academy of Music until he was 13 – while at the same time his older brother Ben taught him the fiddle.

In the book *Musical Memories*, published in 1993, Charlie described his musical education at the hands of his older sibling:

► Remarkable Man of Music: Charlie Lennon.

▼ Man of Music: Charlie Lennon.



*My brother Ben took me under his wing and soon I was being carried on the crossbar of his bicycle to the houses of musicians within a five-mile radius of our home.*

By the time he was fourteen, he was playing with local vocational school principal, Michael Shanley's Seán McDermott Céilí Band – named in honour of the 1916 hero who was a native of Kiltyclogher.

By seventeen, he was a full time musician – with the Richard Fitzgerald Band, the Assaroe Céilí Band and the Emerald Valley Dance Band – with his increasing musical versatility making him a valuable asset as he added more strings to his bow including double bass, electric guitar and drums.

Heading to Liverpool University at the age of 22 to study physics, Charlie went on to earn a doctorate in nuclear physics while at the same time pursuing his interests in classical violin and financing his studies by playing jazz piano in clubs around Liverpool.

At the same time, he continued to play traditional music as a member of the Liverpool Céilí Band from 1960 to 1968. The band won two All-Ireland titles and recorded two albums for Decca. The band also

appeared on Britain's primetime television variety show, *Sunday Night at the London Palladium*.

After meeting teacher and sean-nós singer Sile Ní Fhlaithearta from Spiddal in Connemara at the Clones Fleadh, he married her in 1966. They returned to Ireland in 1969.

Charlie joined Aer Lingus, devising and testing computer programmes – before setting up his own consulting company, CHL Software in 1986.

In parallel with his working life, Charlie became ever more revered among the masters of traditional music. In the early 1970s, he played in a duo with accordionist Joe Burke. After winning a traditional music competition on RTÉ, the pair made the acclaimed album, *Traditional Music of Ireland* in 1973. He also played frequently with Johnny Connolly, Matt Molloy and Mick O'Connor.

The 1970s almost marked the beginning of Charlie Lennon's emergence as a composer – and his works began to appear on albums recorded by himself and others – culminating in his first fiddle album in 1985, *The Emigrant Suite – Deora an Deoraí*, which included a number





of his compositions – many of which were subsequently adopted by De Dannan.

As the scale of his compositional ambitions began to grow, Lennon produced an orchestral suite that in 1991 was released as *Bainis Oileáin/ Island Wedding*, performed by the RTÉ Concert Orchestra with instrumentalists including Frankie Gavin, Mick O'Brien, Vinnie Kilduff and Steve Cooney and singers, Deirbhile Ní Bhrolcháin and Peadar Ó Ceannabháin.

Another major work, *The Famine Suite*, was performed in Claremorris, Co. Mayo, to mark the 150th anniversary of the Great Hunger in 1997. It was also performed in Dublin, Liverpool and in the Lincoln Center in New York by the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra under the title *Flight From the Hungry Land*.

The work was recorded by Charlie's daughter, Éilís, and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra.

With many of his compositions assimilated into the traditional canon, he was awarded the title of Ard-Ollamh by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann in 2005, and a year later he was recognised in the TG4 Gradam Ceoil awards as Cumadóir na Bliana/Composer of the Year.

In 2007 he published his *Irish Fiddle Complete Technique* as a DVD tutor.

Gael Linn commissioned Lennon to write a work to mark the centenary of the Easter Rising in 2016. Entitled *Aille na hAille*, the album featured a variety of new compositions including a sonata for piano and violin played by Finghin Collins and Elizabeth Cooney as well as pieces performed by the Con



▲ **Man of Music:**  
Charlie Lennon.

▼ **For the Record:**  
Some of the more than fifty albums on which Charlie Lennon appeared.

Tempo Quartet, Ronan Browne and Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh.

This was followed by another suite, *Seeking Sanctuary*, premiered in Boston in 2018 with the Palaver String Orchestra and a number of Irish artists.

In demand as an accompanist as well as a soloist, Charlie appeared on over 50 albums dating back to the 1950s.

Charlie and daughter, Éilís, opened a recording studio in Spiddal in 1999, which also hosted a University of Galway diploma in traditional music. The studio was renovated and re-opened as the music and arts venue, Stiúideo Cuan, in 2021.

Under Éilís and Creative Director, Darach Mac Con Iomaire, Stiúideo Cuan has produced numerous programmes for broadcast, including *Ben's Departure* – a film about Charlie's brother, Ben, who died during the pandemic.

Stiúideo Cuan has also premiered new music by many composers as well as promoting an annual series of concerts titled Féasta Ceoil an Spidéil.

In a tribute to Lennon's musical legacy, President Michael D. Higgins said:

*With the passing of Charlie Lennon Irish music has lost one of*

*its most talented and generous artists. Charlie Lennon was an outstanding musician and composer who leaves behind a rich catalogue of compositions.*

*From deep connections in traditional music, growing up in a musical house, he learned the fiddle from his late brother, the acclaimed Ben Lennon.*

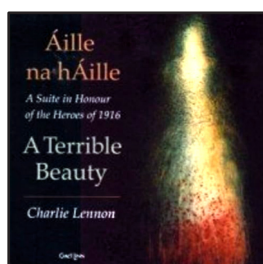
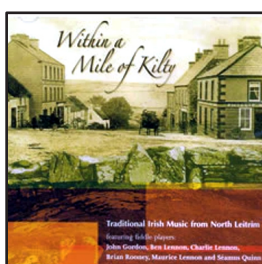
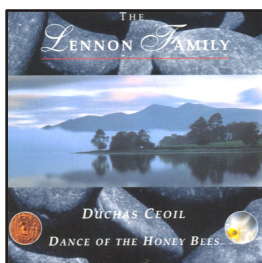
*His compositions such as The Twelve Pins, The Smiling Bride, and The Road to Cashel among so many others will live on through the many musicians who will continue to play them in the decades to come.*

*Named TG4 Composer of the Year in 2006, he will be rightly remembered as both a superb composer, both of traditional tunes and orchestral works and as an accomplished fiddler player and pianist.*

*Indeed, his talents and brilliance for what was challenging were so many that receiving a doctorate in nuclear physics was part of what was a truly remarkable career.*

*May I extend my deepest sympathies to Charlie's wife, Síle Tim Ní Fhlaithearta, his children Seán, Éilís and Donal, and to all his family, friends and fellow musicians.*

Charlie Lennon is survived by his wife, Síle Ní Fhlaithearta and by his children Seán, Dónal and Éilís.





Heather Wood, 1945-2024 ▼

# ÓMÓS: HEATHER WOOD

**H**eather Wood, the last surviving member of the ground-breaking English *a capella* trio, the Young Tradition, died suddenly in New York last month (July).

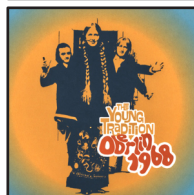
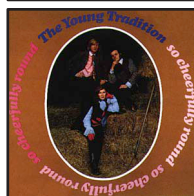
Along with band-mates, Peter Bellamy and Royston Wood (no relation), Heather was highly influential in the 1960s folk revival.

Founded in 1965, the Young Tradition took their name from a club originally called the Grand Tradition – where they sang regularly. As well as the Copper Family, other influences on the trio were American Sacred Harp singing and traditional Balkan singing. Cyril Tawney was a close friend, along with Lou Killen, Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger and Frankie Armstrong.

In her notes to the 1973 reissue of their album, *Galleries*, Heather wrote: ...we were a trio of heads who happened to dig traditional folk music. Really, it all stemmed from that; the way we dressed, the way we acted and the way we sang...

Through their powerful close harmony singing, the Young Tradition introduced the 'old songs' of source singers, like the Copper Family, to new generations – refreshing and reinvigorating old ballads and shanties while at the same time cherishing the legacy.

As well as folk clubs, the group performed at major folk festivals in Britain and North America and recorded a number of albums – which are still acclaimed to this day.



▼ The Young Tradition: (from left) Peter Bellamy, Heather Wood and Royston Wood.



After the Young Tradition ceased performing in 1969, Royston Wood went on to sing with the Albion Country Band and Swan Arcade before being killed in New York in 1990 while helping a broken-down motorist. Peter Bellamy, a remarkable singer and highly creative songwriter, committed suicide in 1991.

Heather was part of several duos, including No Relation – with Royston Wood (as their shared surname was co-incidental) – and Crossover with Andy Wallace. She was also a member of the group, Poor Old Horse.

In the 1970s, Heather Wood emigrated to the US – eventually settling in New York. As well as singing, Heather was also involved in organising and promoting music events – collaborating with a range of organisations including the New York Folk Music Society, the Youth Traditional Song Weekend, the Old Songs Festival, the Mystic Sea Music Festival, the Long Island Traditional Music Association, the TradMad Camp in Massachusetts and Folk Alliance International.

Heather also made significant contributions to the work of the Washington-based American Folklife Center (AFC) – where she contributed to a number of AFC collections.

In a tribute to Woods, the AFC noted:

*Heather had no close relatives and considered the friends she made through folk music to be family. We will miss her wit and wisdom (and of course, her songs) at future folk music family gatherings.*

The Copper family added their condolences:

*Sad news... we have just learned of the death of Heather Wood. She seemed indestructible.*

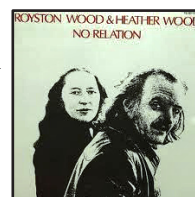
*She was a good friend to the family from her days with Peter and Royston visiting as one third of the Young Tradition, to keeping a watchful eye on us when we first visited the USA.*

*We last saw her when she made the trip over from New York to sing at Bob Copper's Centenary event, forever named 'Bobstock' by Ian Anderson. Always scrupulous in their acknowledgement of the sources of songs, her work both with the YT and subsequently contributed to the fact that the Copper Family were even known about on America's East Coast. We have lost a dear friend.*

Eliza and Martin Carthy added a brief but heartfelt comment:

*The death of our dear family friend and supporter through hard times, Heather Wood, has hit very hard and we need a little regrouping time.*

Adding to the sense of shock at the news of her sudden death was the fact that Heather was generally in good health. Indeed her website included the statement: "I am never ill."





# ÓMÓS: RON KAVANAGH

The uniquely talented, Ron Kavanagh – singer, song-writer, composer and multi-instrumentalist – “passed away peacefully in the exceptional care of the staff at Cork University Hospital after a long illness bravely borne,” according to the death notice published in May.

Born in Fermoy in 1950, Ron Kavanagh, was the son of an Irish father, Joe, and an American mother, Dolores, from Chicago with Cajun roots. He grew up in MacCurtain Street where his parents ran Captain Joe’s pub.

Performing as Kavana for much of his career, he was a singer, multi-instrumentalist and highly acclaimed songwriter – involved in a variety of styles including folk, folk-rock, traditional music, and British-style rhythm and blues.

In a long and varied career in music, he played with some leading figures in R&B like Jack Bruce, Charlie Watts, Alexis Korner, Memphis Slim and Champion Jack Dupree as well as Tex-Mex maestro, Flaco Jimenez.

He toured with Elvis Costello in support of the Pogues with whom he also appeared on their album *If I Should Fall From Grace With God*. He co-wrote two songs with Terry Woods of the Pogues: *Every Man is a King* (In the U.S. of A.) and *Young Ned of the Hill*, the latter featuring on the Pogues’ album, *Peace and Love*.

Kavanagh led a number of bands including Kavana’s Krisis Band and Alias Ron Kavana, the latter named as ‘Best Live Act in the World’ by *Folk Roots* magazine in 1989, 1990 and 1991. With Terry Woods, he also formed the band, The Bucks, which recorded the album, *Dancing to the Ceili Band*, released in 1994.

Although the album was well received by fans and critics, the group disbanded soon after citing lack of support from the record label, with Kavanagh complaining that he “never got a penny” for the album.

Returning to his Alias band, Ron recorded the self-financed album, *Galway to Graceland* in 1995. But financial issues meant that it was deleted before it could receive a full release.

Kavanagh also appeared on – or composed music for – the soundtracks of such films as *Sid and Nancy*, *Ryan’s Daughter* and *Hidden Agenda*.

At this time, Kavanagh was also working periodically with Shane MacGowan – including appearing in one of the early line-ups of MacGowan’s band, The Popes.

Taking a break from music in the late 1990s, Ron went to university – graduating in Irish studies and film studies – beginning a new creative phase which included film-making alongside music projects with historical themes – bringing him back to the traditional music canon.

In the new millennium, Kavanagh released a double album, *Irish Songs of Rebellion, Resistance and Reconciliation*, in 2006, followed by the four disc set, *Irish Ways: Story of Ireland in Song, Music and Poetry*, in 2007. Attributed to the Alias Acoustic Band, the albums explored various aspects of Irish history through traditional songs as well



▲ Ron Kavanagh  
1950-2024

as some of Ron’s own compositions – with spoken word elements added on *Irish Ways*.

This album also featured contributions by a number of guests including Paddy Keenan, Niamh Parsons, Shane MacGowan, Derek Hickey, Desi Wilkinson, Leonard Barry, Terry Woods, Mick McAuley, Gino Lupari and Mick Flynn.

Ron continued his journey through the traditional Irish song book in the album, *40 Favourite Folk Songs*, which was released in 2011 with guests including Tommy McCarthy, Niamh Parsons, Anne Armstrong and Mickey Dunne.

Ron had a particular connection with McCarthy as well as many other singers from the Traveller community like Margaret Barry and Pecker Dunne. Tommy McCarthy made a point of acknowledging Ron’s support when he received his Gradam as Singer of the Year in 2019.

A remarkably talented song-writer, Kavanagh’s subjects have included songs celebrating life’s joys and lamenting life’s sorrows – but perhaps his most memorable song – and one which has, itself, entered the repertoire of singing sessions around Ireland – is his magnum opus, *Reconciliation*, which marries the political and the personal dimensions so seamlessly.

Ron, who was predeceased by his wife, Breda, is survived by his daughter, Georgia and three grandsons and his brother, Paul.

▼ In Good Company: Ron Kavanagh (far left) on stage at the 2014 Edmonton Folk Festival in Canada with Siobhán Peoples, Niamh Parsons, Paddy Keenan, Lúnasa, Andy Irvine, Dónal Lunny and Sharon Shannon (Photo: Niamh Parsons).





The landmark American activist, singer, songwriter, scholar and Smithsonian Folklways artist, Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon, died last month (July) after a lifetime demonstrating the power of music in bringing people together to fight for freedom and justice – from the student protests of the 1960s through to contemporary struggles against white supremacy.

As a founding member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)'s Freedom Singers – created in 1962 at the suggestion of Pete Seeger – Reagon performed across the USA to raise funds for the civil rights movement. The Freedom Singers also performed at the March on Washington DC in 1963 – and included in its line-up, Johnson Reagon's future husband, Cordell Reagon.

During the 1960s and 1970s, she recorded several solo albums, including *Folk Songs: The South* (released by Folkways in 1965) and *Give Your Hands to Struggle* (released by Paredon Records in 1975 and re-released by Folkways in 1997).

She also founded the twice Grammy-nominated all-Black women's *cappella* group Sweet Honey in the Rock – having previously led another female ensemble, the Harambee Singers.

Born and raised in Georgia, where her father served as a Baptist preacher, Johnson Reagon grew up attending Sunday services full of *a cappella* singing – the source of many songs she would later adapt into protest music.



## ÓMÓS: BERNICE JOHNSON REAGON

▲ Bernice Johnson Reagon (Photo: Jim Harrison)

As a curator and historian at the Smithsonian, Reagon explored how Black music fueled movements for change. In 1974, she joined the Smithsonian's Division of Performing Arts, where she was pivotal in establishing the African Diaspora Programme and recruiting Black artists to participate in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival.

Having achieved a PhD in American History from Howard University in 1975, Reagon founded the Programme in Black American Culture at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History (NMAH) in 1976.

She later continued her work as *curator emeritus* at NMAH and as Professor Emeritus of History at American University, where she taught from 1993 to 2003.

Recognised as an outstanding performer-scholar, Johnson Reagon received countless awards, including a MacArthur 'genius' grant and more than a dozen honorary degrees and a Presidential medal.

Throughout her life, she composed music and songs in many genres, traditions and formats. "It's like claiming your space," she once said. "We had been too long out of the light. It was our time. It still is."

Johnson Reagon also helped to shape the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) as a member of the museum's Scholarly Advisory Committee.

"Bernice's fierce intellect was only matched by her fierce sense of justice she applied to the struggle for civil rights," said Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III.

"As a member of the NMAAHC Scholarly Advisory Council, her wisdom was invaluable in creating the intellectual framework of the museum. Her lyrics and music lift my spirits and embody her lifelong work to challenge America to live up to its ideals: *We who believe in freedom will not rest until it comes.*"



▲ Sweet Honey in the Rock live at Ravinia (Photo: originally posted to Flickr by singitonline CC BY-SA 2.0)





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ANNE 0872663718

ADMISSION  
€10



## major scéal



## Joe Heaney – Man Et Artist

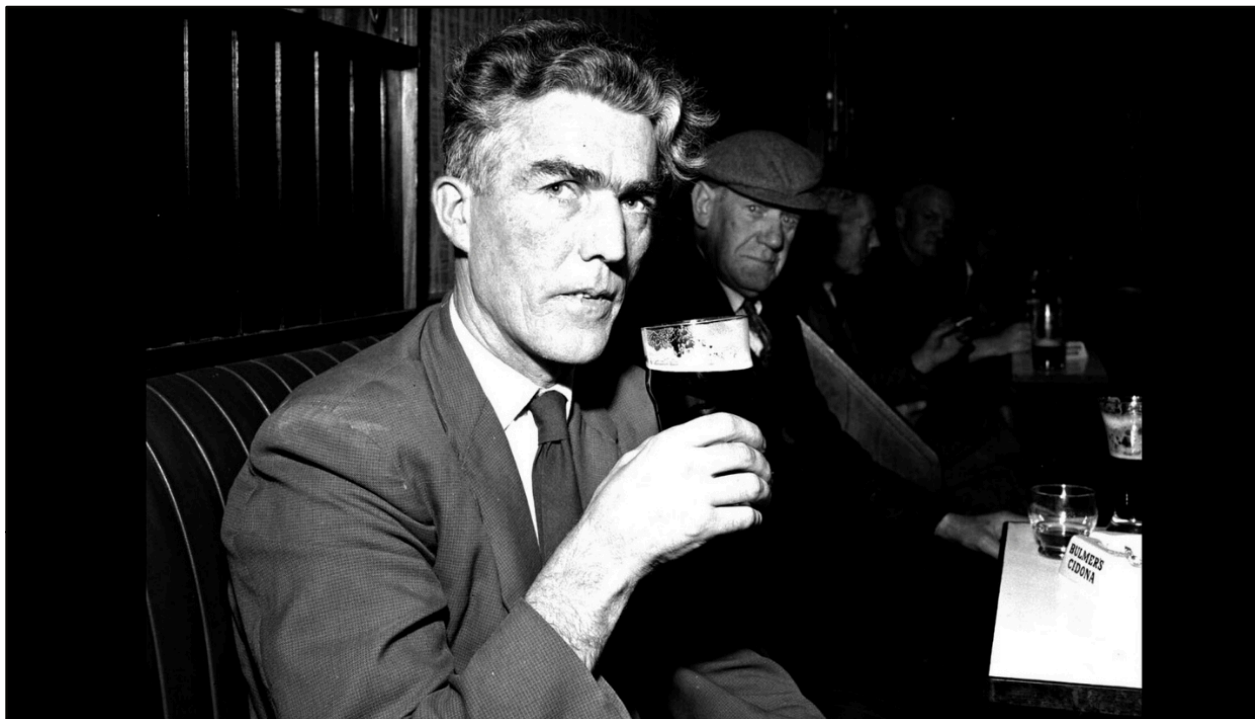
In this issue of *fonn*, ethnomusicologist, Virginia Blankenhorn, provides the second instalment of a three-part reflection on the life and times of the iconic Conamara singer, Joe Heaney/Seosamh Ó hÉanaí, who died on May 1, 1984.

This article is a substantially revised, updated and expanded version of an essay first published in 2010 on the website [www.joeheaney.org](http://www.joeheaney.org); hyperlinks to that and other sites are included here. All four essays originally written for the website are now located at [https://www.academia.edu/60674188/Joe\\_Heaney\\_and\\_His\\_Tradition](https://www.academia.edu/60674188/Joe_Heaney_and_His_Tradition), where readers will also find a comprehensive, hyperlinked listing of the singer's repertoire in both Irish and English; transcriptions and notes on several items not presently included on the site; a list of items recorded from and by members of the Heaney family in the National Folklore Collection, University College Dublin; and a summary of Joe Heaney's English-language repertoire in the Roud, Laws and Child indexes.

**T**he events of Joe Heaney's life are doubtless revealing, but they may reveal more about the times he lived in – the good luck and the bad, the attitudes and prejudices of others – than they reveal about the man himself. It's how a person responds to events and circumstances that reveals most about his character.







## A Purposeful Life

Most people would regard a good deal of what happened to Joe as unfortunate. His childhood was shaped by poverty, a circumstance that made his dismissal from secondary school more disastrous than it might have been for someone whose background offered other alternatives. Emigration was virtually forced upon him.

For most of his adult life he lived alone in lodgings, or with friends, or in apartments in foreign countries. His short-lived attempt at domestic life was unsuccessful. He lived hand-to-mouth, and most of his paid employment bore no relation to his real life's work.

Despite these setbacks, Joe remained remarkably single-minded in his devotion to the traditions he bore. While Carna was poor in economic terms, its cultural riches were unassailable. Joe was determined not to squander this inheritance – indeed, he was determined to pass it on to others.

The arc of his life, even in its disappointments, reflects this determination. The world-wide revival of interest in traditional music and song, which began in the 1950s and continued through the 1970s, coincided with Joe's growing awareness of the importance of his songs not just to his own community, but to the world at large.

His move from Scotland to England, undertaken for domestic reasons, may have become permanent as a result of his acceptance among the Irish of Camden Town and the enthusiastic welcome he received from the likes of Ewan MacColl and others in the traditional music scene.

***While Carna was poor in economic terms, its cultural riches were unassailable. Joe was determined not to squander this inheritance – indeed, he was determined to pass it on to others.***



▲ Liam Mac Con Iomaire  
(Photo: Máire Uí Mhaicín/Foras na Gaeilge).

As Joe told Mick Moloney:

If you sang a good song in a bar in Camden Town then, you'd get silence.... I used to see people putting down the darts while somebody was singing. ... Even a song in Irish would go down well, and even people in the public bar would listen to people in the saloon bar singing. *The Rocks of Bawn* was their favourite, and *Curacháí na Trá Báine* was the favourite of the fellows from Conamara...<sup>1</sup>

Joe returned to Dublin in 1961 because he thought the 'ballad boom' might allow him to earn a living doing what he loved. When that didn't work out, he moved to the United States following his experience at the Newport Folk Festival when, as he said, 'for the first time I found an audience for my songs and stories such as I have never had before.'

And while we cannot doubt that he very much wanted to return to Ireland, it is significant that when he was offered a position with Gaeltarra Éireann – as a building and grounds custodian at their premises in Connemara – he chose to continue doing the work he loved, even if it meant staying in America.

<sup>1</sup>Liam Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí: Nár fhágha mé bás choíche*, Cló Iar-Chonnachta (2007), 184-5. Mac Con Iomaire's biography of Joe Heaney, written in Irish, has been an invaluable resource in the preparation of this article. Those unable to read Irish may still enjoy the many passages quoted from interviews conducted in English; and the bibliography on pages 473-6 provides a useful resource for further study.



▼ Mick Moloney

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## *'Everyone in the world can have my songs'*

**I**t is ironic that Joe's background – including the poverty and the hand-to-mouth lifestyle – doubtless made him more interesting to the middle-class Americans who formed the majority of his students and audiences than he would have been if he had come equipped with a middle-class urban upbringing and a college degree. As Mick Moloney pointed out:

[Joe Heaney] was a source of fascination to a lot of people in America, people involved in folk music in America, in the urban folk scene, folk revival. They would have been middle-class people, educated liberals, but they wouldn't have come from a traditional community. To them Joe Heaney was the real deal. He was the man from the mountains. He was the man from the past. And he represented the gold nugget, the thing they all were looking for. ...

They were people who really had heard a lot of music. They would have been multicultural through education and they would have been exposed to lots of different cultures. And they knew when Joe Heaney sang that this was the real thing. ... There was a dignity about him. I think it was his carriage, his deportment, his appearance, plus the way he represented himself. And people saw him almost in a priestly way.

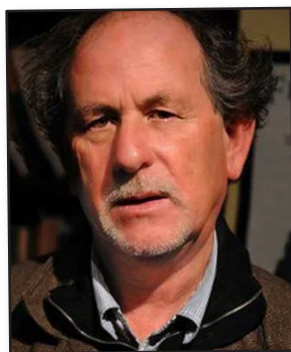
I would always call what he was doing a vocation, because it was almost a priestly function. He saw the sacred – priestly is probably not the word – sacred would definitely be the word. I never saw anything like it. He was a complex man and a great, great artist. And passionate beyond belief in what he did. A prophet, almost!<sup>2</sup>

There can be no doubt that Joe Heaney's gifts were huge, that his commitment was genuine, and that he was a charismatic, spellbinding performer on stage. If Moloney is correct in this assessment, as he surely is, we must give Joe's artistry, his ability – even when singing in an unknown language about an unfamiliar culture – to hold an audience captive for hours at a time, the lion's share of the credit for his popularity.

At the same time, it is surely also true that the audience's desire to be spellbound, their longing to experience 'the real deal,' played a considerable part in Joe's success. As western civilization has become more homogeneous, experiencing cultural difference has become difficult, especially for the middle-class.

'Authenticity' has become a selling-point – though the meaning of the term is a constantly-moving target. So the fact that Joe spoke an exotic language, grew up in an area that many would regard as 'remote,' and represented the traditional rural and seafaring past made him someone that these people yearned to have contact with.

Such yearning was not limited to Americans. Cork-born writer Liam Ó Muirthile recalled the 1960s in an article for the *Irish Times* in January, 1996:



▲ Liam Ó Muirthile (Photo: Máire Uí Mhaicín/Foras na Gaeilge).

<sup>2</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 364–5. Limerick-born Mick Moloney's own career did not suffer as a result of his middle-class upbringing or academic qualifications (see his website [www.mickmoloney.com](http://www.mickmoloney.com)). At the same time, he would probably not have expected an article about him to contain the words 'priestly,' 'sacred' and 'prophet'.



Joe Heaney and Níoclás Tóibín were the two most prominent sean-nós singers of the late 1960s. They were the first to inspire city youth like me to learn the sean-nós from their Gael-Linn recordings... For me, interest in sean-nós was the same as interest in the blues or in Woodie Guthrie – a hunt for the fundamental native thing, for the nuclear kernel.<sup>3</sup>

The evil twin of this reverential obsession with the 'fundamental native thing,' however, is purist snobbery. Liam Ó Muirthile again:

The view was still widely held that it was impossible to learn sean-nós – that, like the language, you had to imbibe it with your mother's milk. But it was bottles and Farex that we had at home. One singer told me at that time that I hadn't any 'nós' and never would.

This elitist attitude used to make Joe mad. As he told Joe Kennedy in 1969:

What I really want to do is bring people together in traditional singing. Here in this city [Dublin] there are many people who love traditional music and know some songs but, because they do not come from a Gaelic-speaking area, are afraid to get up and sing. These people must be encouraged. I'm very disappointed at the atmosphere in some clubs which seem to be run for the select few only, and there is no encouragement for the person on the fringe, the city-born person. As far as I am concerned everyone in the world can have my songs. I will sing them for everyone to learn, and I love to be able to bring people to the stage, to encourage people who love the songs but have not the tradition since birth. I have no time for the people who make holy places out of clubs and who have no time for a singer who is not a born traditional singer.<sup>4</sup>

That Joe felt strongly on this point is reflected throughout his life. A revealing early incident

was his decision to sing *Caoineadh na dTrí Muire* on stage during the Oícheanta Seanchais at the Damer Hall in the 1950s. Prior to that public performance, this and the other religious songs that Joe inherited were sung only at home, as part of the private observance of the religious occasions to which they were linked.<sup>5</sup>

Joe's decision to sing this song in a less reverential setting for a wider audience was not a careless one; indeed, one can well imagine other singers deciding that such a performance would be inappropriate. But Joe felt that the world – meaning the world beyond Carna, beyond the Gaeltacht – should hear it.<sup>6</sup>

Another indication of Joe's passion on this point came at the end of his life, when he learned that the Joe Heaney Collection was being established at the University of Washington. He resisted the notion, urged upon him by one friend, that access to the collection should be limited to people of Irish heritage. Indeed, the more that this person argued in favour of limiting access, the more determined he became that there be no such limitation. Thanks to the [collaboration](#) between University of Washington and NUIG, Joe's wishes in this regard have now been carried out.

<sup>3</sup>An Peann Coitianta, 'Irish Times', 11 January 1996; quoted in Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 461–2. Translated from Irish.

<sup>4</sup>Interviewed in the *Irish Independent*, 20 August 1969; see Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 256–7.

<sup>5</sup>See Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 89–109.

<sup>6</sup>As we have seen, there were songs that Joe preferred not to sing in public; but these were songs that, in his view, carried the potential to cause offense.





## A Complicated Character

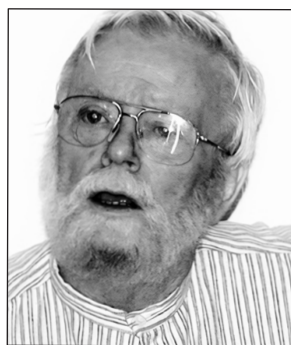
**L**ike most people, Joe was a mass of contradictions. Despite the generosity we have just noted, many people found him unapproachable. Song collector, Tom Munnelly, recalling nights they spent together in O'Donoghue's, put it down to Joe's having a high opinion of himself:

We often shared the same stretch of bar for the night but contiguity did not lead to companionship. There was a peppery arrogance about Joe Heaney's behaviour which I never cared for.... It is an unfortunate fact that many great artists were and are unlovely people. And Joe Heaney was a great artist.

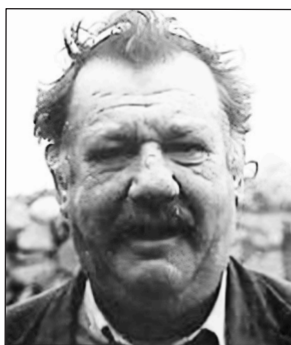
It was his very justified belief in his outstanding ability as an interpreter and as a conduit of a magnificent tradition which gave him an air of superiority which he handled badly with unfortunate social results. If he was truculent and resentful, he had much to be resentful for, and he seems to have been his own worst enemy.

Others approached him with caution, and even one of his closest friends, Johnny Chóil Mhaidhc Ó Coisdealbha, admitted that 'Joe could be petulant'.<sup>7</sup>

He held strong views, and disliked being challenged. On occasion, however, his assumption of authority backfired on him. Perhaps the most famous incident occurred in the Aran Islands, where a number of Connemara singers went to perform a concert in 1971. The audience became restive under a



▲ **Tom Munnelly** (Photo: Colm Keating)



▲ **Johnny Chóil Mhaidhc Ó Coisdealbha**

steady diet of long, slow songs. Carraroe singer Tomás Mac Eoin tells the story:

The concert went on, and it seems as though it wasn't going down too well. Dónal Ó Lubhláí was master of ceremonies, and I heard him saying to Joe Heaney, 'Things aren't going well - we're not getting much silence.' Joe said, 'Leave it to me! I'll sort them out!' And away he goes onto the stage and says, 'Can you hear us?' 'Yes!' comes the reply. 'Well, I'm afraid that I can hear you, too!' The whole night was ruined. They started hooting and whistling at him.<sup>8</sup>

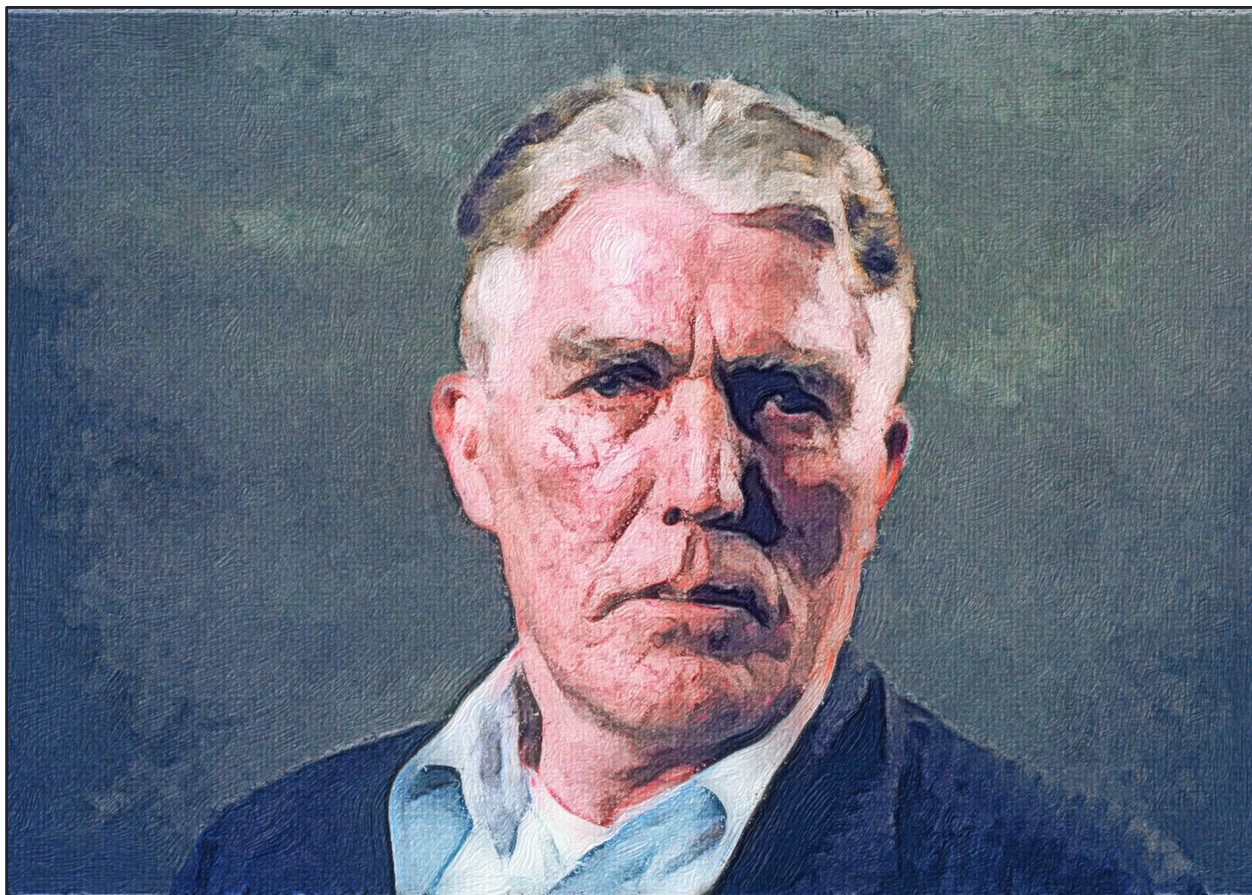
While Joe could show considerable patience with serious questions from students and from people he respected, he had a sharp tongue, and he didn't suffer fools gladly. Once you were in his bad books, you stayed there. Tomás Mac Eoin, in addition to being a traditional singer and a very popular figure throughout Connemara, had the misfortune of attracting Joe's scorn over a lighthearted song he composed - *An Damhán Alla* (*The Spider*) - which he and two friends recorded with a guitar accompaniment. It became a hit on Raidió na Gaeltachta. Joe Heaney hated the guitar's pervasive presence on the folk scene, and reviled such compositions: 'Oh! Those people who think they can compose new songs and accompany them with the guitar!'

<sup>7</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 143. Translated from Irish.

<sup>8</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 280. Translated from Irish.

<sup>9</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 148. Translated from Irish.





***Joe seems to have believed in the maxim that the best defence is a strong offence...***

Years later he ran into Tomás Mac Eoin in Connemara and greeted him sarcastically, 'Oh, look where the little spider's turned up!'<sup>9</sup>

Joe seems to have believed in the maxim that the best defence is a strong offence, as his former student Sean Williams recalled:

He was so quiet about his marriage. I think most of us didn't know that he was married. And I asked him once: 'What about the family at home?' And he had a stock answer to that question, which was 'I gave up three things twenty years ago, and I'm never going back!' And one had to assume 'cigarettes, alcohol and women.' But that was the stock answer when anybody asked him anything about relationships, even though he had classic ways of flirting with his female students...

And so a lot of us spent a lot of time defending our relationships, our hair colour, our preferences in music; and I think that was his way of both flirting and challenging. And I think for him flirting and challenging was just blended exactly. That was one of the ways he operated at comfort level. I think he needed to see vulnerability to feel like he had something to offer.<sup>10</sup>



▼ Sean Williams: former student of Joe Heaney

For others, it seemed clear that Joe's arrogance masked deep unhappiness. Diarmaid Breathnach, writer and former librarian at RTÉ, met Joe in 1957:

I had great respect for him as a singer. But it seemed to me... that he was unhappy with his life and that he was sorry for himself. And I was a bit afraid of him for that reason. I felt that he was not a happy person – that was the strongest impression I got.<sup>11</sup>

His student Steve Coleman, now lecturing in Anthropology at NUI Maynooth, was one of several who thought Joe was lonely:

It never seemed to me that he was as sure of himself as other people thought. To me, he seemed tormented, that he was thinking of the life he'd led and the things that had happened to him. He was living by himself, and he seemed lonely. He was very glad when people visited him, but you'd have to be confident to go to him...

He was friendly, but at the same time he was moody. He might turn on you for no particular reason, and the next minute he'd be great friends with you again. I was kind of terrified of him at first, because he seemed larger than life, in a way.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 393.

<sup>11</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 163. Translated from Irish.

<sup>12</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 390. Translated from Irish.



▼ **Duet:** Joe Heaney and Liam Clancy at the 1966 Newport Folk Festival  
(Photo: Newport Festivals Foundation).

**major scéal:**  
joe heaney

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## *A Bitter Legacy*

**D**espite his enormous gifts and accomplishments, Joe Heaney was obviously a moody and insecure man. But why? A good deal of the answer may lie in the nature of Joe's cultural inheritance.

During his lifetime, being an Irish speaker from the Gaeltacht – however interesting and exotic it made Joe to people abroad – carried a stigma at home and, for that matter, among many recent Irish immigrants in the United States.

Many Irish people viewed the Gaeltacht as a godforsaken place where the people lived in squalor, themselves and their livestock under the same roof. The Irish language was a badge of economic deprivation. Poverty was shameful. Many an emigrant who came home for a holiday was seen to put on airs and profess to have forgotten his native language.

The people of the Gaeltacht were well acquainted with such bigotry, harboured by many who were only a generation or two beyond poverty themselves. Sad to say, many people in the Gaeltacht areas themselves internalized these stigmas, which may explain Joe's declaring with some vehemence in later years, 'It's no shame to be poor!'

Liam Clancy recalls an occasion, shortly before Joe was to depart Dublin for England:

***Given the ignorant stereotyping that they had to endure, it's little wonder that many in Connemara ... wore chips on their shoulders.***

There was always this pervasive mood of sadness and insecurity about him. That's what I remember most about Joe at that time. He had no self-confidence or self-esteem. And when he had enough drink, the other side of him came out, the chip on the shoulder: 'You're making fun of me because I talk Irish, because I'm a Connemara man.' And that anger would come out. And he was as prickly as a thornbush when he was in that mood.<sup>13</sup>

Given the ignorant stereotyping that they had to endure, it's little wonder that many in Connemara, including Joe Heaney, wore chips on their shoulders.

Astonishingly – despite the efforts of the Clancy Brothers and others – many of these attitudes persisted until the worldwide phenomenon of *Riverdance* at last persuaded the majority of Irish people, both at home and abroad, that their cultural heritage was something they should take pride in, rather than feel ashamed of.

Living abroad, however, relieved some of this burden. In England and, later, in the States, Joe largely dealt with people who were not of Irish extraction. As a result, he met with less prejudice, and he allowed himself to be more relaxed, more likeable.

<sup>13</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 129.





This was important, because what really made him happy was knowing that others liked him, and that they liked his singing. Mayo native Martin Byrne shared lodgings with Joe in Southampton when both of them were working in England:

When Joe got the proper response something happened to him. His face would light up, and he got so much pleasure out of seeing others getting pleasure. It was a kind of a gift, especially when he sang in Gaelic... I loved his singing even though I can't sing myself. And I think that helped our friendship.<sup>14</sup>

English singer John Faulkner who with his then partner, Dolores Keane, visited Joe in New York in the mid-1970s, confirmed the mutual admiration between Joe and people on the English folk scene at that time:

I thought he was a great guy and a fantastic singer. Not only did I get along absolutely well with him, but so did most English people. All the people I knew in the folk scene at the time in England, people like Martin Carthy and Louis Killen, they were all huge devotees of Joe.<sup>15</sup>

It seems hardly surprising that Joe found it easier to relate to English people and Americans than to some Irish people. In Ireland, he had his critics as well as his admirers, and the possibility of someone challenging his knowledge, begrudging him his success, or making a bigoted remark was ever-present.

For his English and American admirers, on the other hand, Joe was 'the master.' Joe reflected on this distinction in 1982, when he was interviewed by Bill Stuart for the *Sunday World* just before his concert in the National Concert Hall in Dublin:

I don't know how long I'll stay [at University of Washington], but this is the best move I have ever made.

They pay me \$1,600 a month and the students are very receptive. Not one of them is of Irish descent. Most of them are women. I surely hope that they make it part of their thesis and teach it and pass it on. I wouldn't have a hope in hell of doing that here.

I can go out to the schools in Seattle and teach the kids for an hour. The teachers welcome you. I couldn't do it here. They'd laugh at you here if you asked for a television programme. I think they're trying to do away with the language. It's a bloody shame. In every country in the world, the first thing they do is play their own music and speak their own language, and then they go on to something else.

Once the language is gone in any culture that's the beginning of the end. The language is the mainstay of it. I think the language will be gone here in 15 years. ... I think the Government has a lot to answer for.<sup>16</sup>

There was even more straight talk in an interview Joe recorded with Maidhc P. Ó Conaola for Raidió na Gaeltachta in 1979:

Do you know that you'll hear more culture on the radio and television over [in America] than you will here? Now, I'll tell you the truth, I'm not giving very high marks to Raidió na Gaeltachta either. I hope they'll remember that it's the Gaeltacht radio, do you get me? If they do, everything will be alright. But now, if you don't mind my saying it, there are certain people who want to bring in 'pop' I think. And that's not why Raidió na Gaeltachta was founded. ... I'm going to say one thing – that it's the language of Máirtín Ó Cadhain and of the people of the Civil Rights movement that should be spoken, for without them there wouldn't even be a Raidió na Gaeltachta.

They shouldn't be exposing children to things that were never heard in the Gaeltacht... It's alright to compose a song, but people are composing songs nowadays and bringing in guitars and playing them – isn't that 'pop'? If you're trying to bring 'pop' into Irish, you might as well get rid of Raidió na Gaeltachta altogether. Let them sing the old songs. Wasn't that why [Raidió na Gaeltachta] was founded – to present the old songs to the community?... There's no good in something that was composed yesterday. People survived, they went through terrible times, to keep things alive, and they should be recognized for that.<sup>17</sup>

Once again, Joe's fundamental concern is for the integrity and dignity of the traditions he had inherited, and he is outspoken in his loathing for anything – lack of official commitment to the Irish language, 'pop' music on Gaeltacht airwaves, the omnipresence of guitars – that he sees as a threat to that tradition, a betrayal of that heritage.

Joe was a deeply conservative person, and the process of cultural change made him uneasy. The fact that he lived abroad during a period of accelerating cultural transformation probably made each journey home more of a shock than it might otherwise have been.



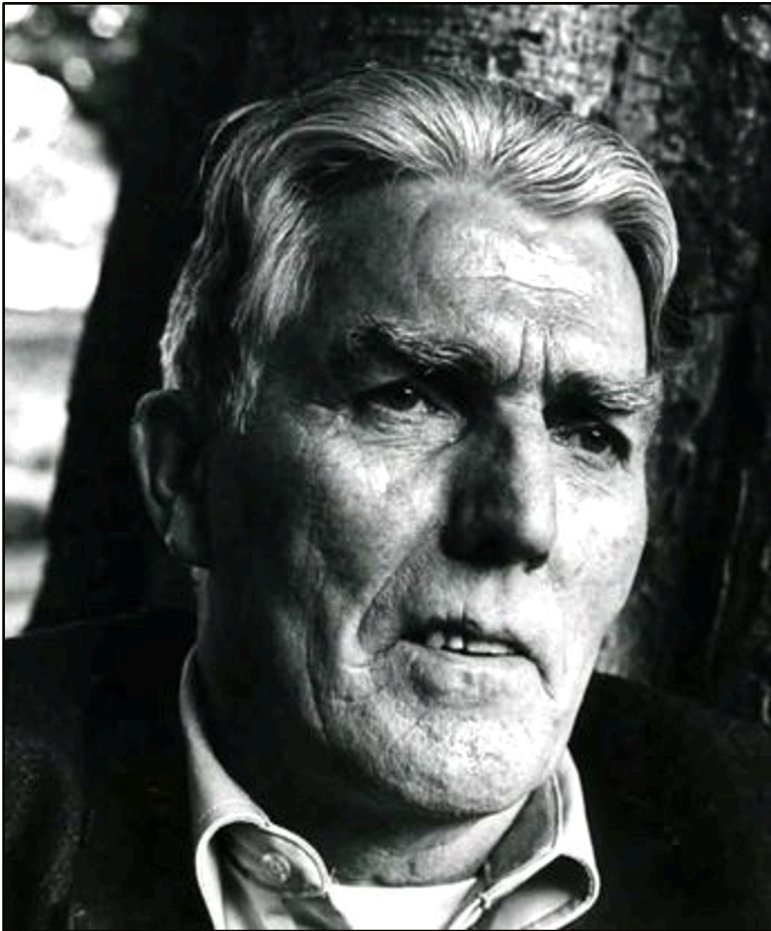
► Maidhc P. Ó Conaola  
(Photo: RTÉ/Raidió na Gaeltachta)

<sup>14</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 135.

<sup>15</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 301-2.

<sup>16</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 370.

<sup>17</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 326-8. Translated from Irish.

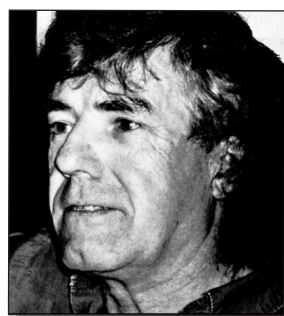
▼ **Joe Heaney** (Photo: Cló Iar-Chonnacht Teo).

## Performer

**J**oe Heaney was an exceptionally compelling performer. Lou Killen, who later came to know Joe in Seattle, first encountered him in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne in 1962. In an article published following Joe's death, Killen wrote:

For close to an hour and a half, Joe Heaney had that audience mesmerized. I stood at the back of the room filled with wonder at his incredible vocalization, the deep resonant voice, the baroque complexity of his ornamentation, and the centredness of his performing. Every one of us was drawn into the ancient culture Joe represented. We were drawn by the passion and commitment Joe had to that culture, of which he was a part – just as every song was a part of Joe Heaney. That evening, Joe had found that place of perfect balance within himself, that centre where he was one with the past, present and future, within and without. From there, through his songs, he was able to transmit his feeling to us all as though we were in perfect communion with him.<sup>18</sup>

Peggy Seeger described for Liam Mac Con Iomaire how Joe would hold the audience's attention at The Singers Club:

▲ **Lou Killen**▲ **Peggy Seeger**

He sang with such joy in singing, even when he was singing miserable songs. He just disappeared into his songs. He did not sing for the audience. He sang for himself.<sup>19</sup>

She also emphasized that Joe, unlike some of those who were invited to perform at The Singers Club, always saw to it that the material he chose challenged his audiences. '[W]hat Joe would do, he would not give you his simplest stuff. He would just launch in, in Irish and in English, and if you didn't like it, too bad!'<sup>20</sup>

At the same time, Joe gave careful thought to the expectations that his audiences brought to his concerts and presentations. Most of his public performances – at any rate, those given outside of Ireland – were designed for people with no knowledge of Irish tradition.

He wove his material through a matrix of historical themes – wars, hardship, emigration, patriotism – with the idea that people should be informed as well as entertained, and should depart a bit wiser than they came.

He developed a number of set-pieces, such as *The American Wake* and *The Rocks of Bawn*, in both of which he marshalled a number of elements in order to describe the realities of Connemara life in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. *Come Lay Me Down* was a song that he himself adapted for use when he was talking about the Famine – a theme that he might have preferred not to deal with, but about which people persistently questioned him.<sup>21</sup>

He sought common ground with his audiences, as when he sang *Éamonn an Chnoic* at the Sydney Opera House, and related it to folklore about the Australian bandit Ned Kelly.

When he chose a song in Irish, Joe made sure to explain its background and its meaning, perhaps by giving a brief translation, always by emphasizing the humanity and the feelings of the person whose point-of-view the song portrayed.

One of his favourite presentations, *Eileanóir a Rún*, began with the love story of Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh and Eleanor Kavanagh, and often ended with a performance in English of the song, *Eileen Aroon*, so that those who had no Irish could at least taste the emotional intensity of the original song.

As much as his spellbinding performance of the songs themselves, these devices helped Joe to draw people into the charmed circle round the fire in his boyhood home.

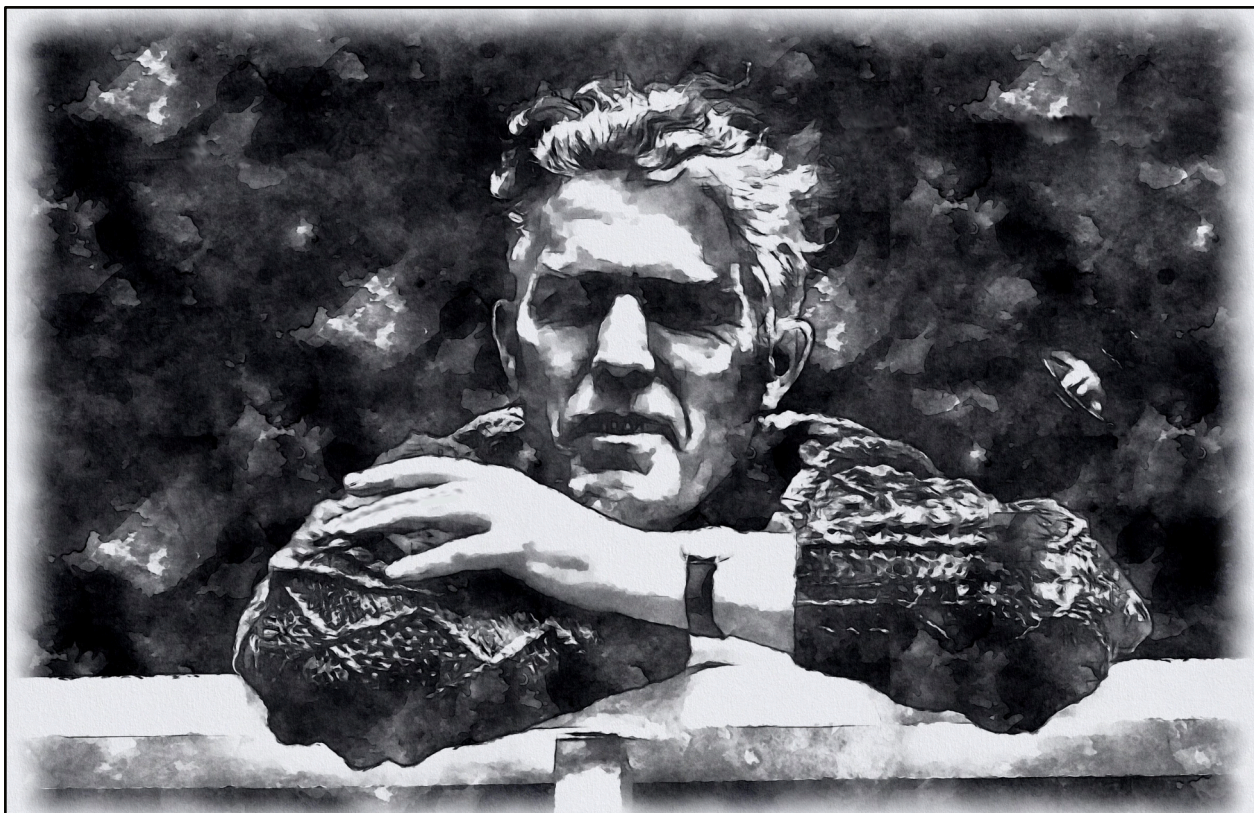
<sup>18</sup>'Memories of Joe Heaney,' *Seattle Folklore Society Journal*, (Fall 1984), 3.

<sup>19</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 196.

<sup>20</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 191.

<sup>21</sup>See Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 71-88.





## Teacher

**I**n the same way, when Joe began teaching, he brought to that task a dual awareness of his tradition, not just as someone who was born to it, but equally importantly as someone who could see into it, as it were, from the outside, and who had developed an interest in understanding it from a scholarly perspective.

His education in these terms had arguably begun at the hands of Ewan MacColl, who took an intense interest in understanding how Joe viewed his own art. Later, contact with American academics like Kenneth Goldstein and Fredric Lieberman as well as with students helped Joe develop ways of talking about his singing and storytelling.<sup>22</sup>

This is not to say that he became an academic – he lacked the necessary objectivity, never mind the cool analytical discipline – but he did manage to hold his own.<sup>23</sup> Steve Coleman writes:

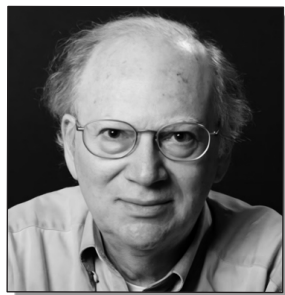
I am interested in Joe's university career, in which he was required to explain and interpret his singing style to audiences of professional musicologists ... Asked formalist questions (such as 'How do you know where to put grace notes in a song?'), Joe argued passionately and consistently for a radically different understanding of his tradition, in which musical form is only one aspect of a much wider act of orientation. He mobilized all available resources to articulate and defend this vision, including technical musicological terms, *non-sequitur*, and a few otherwise dubious

recollections and interpretations. In doing so he wasn't being scientific, but was, arguably, articulating his insights as best he could to people who came with quite different presuppositions about music, song, and much more.<sup>24</sup>

Joe's students at Wesleyan University and later at the University of Washington included a wide range of people, including undergraduates, graduate students, participants in adult evening classes, and attendees at university-sponsored workshops and lecture-demonstrations.

In addition, he visited elementary schools and public libraries, and continued to perform in concerts and festivals. In some of these appearances, the line between 'concert' and 'class' was indistinct; but whether he was appearing before a [group of schoolchildren](#) or a gathering of academics, Joe understood that they needed to learn as well as to be entertained.

Many of his university classes focused on a stated theme. Halloween, for example, would



▲ Frederic Lieberman



▲ Kenneth Goldstein

<sup>22</sup>In addition to the MacColl/Seeger interviews, see also conversations with Esther Warkov, James Cowdery, Jill Linzee, and the lecture/demonstration that he gave along with Mike Seeger at University of Washington in 1978.

<sup>23</sup>On some occasions, by befuddling his questioners, as in the MacColl interview where Joe is grappling with MacColl's questions about the 'nyahh.'

<sup>24</sup>'Joe Heaney Meets the Academy,' *Irish Journal of Anthropology* 1 (1996), 69–85.



involve discussion of [fairies](#) and the [underworld](#), and [Christmas](#) and [Easter](#) would prompt discussion and performance of the religious songs. Other sessions might focus on [boats](#), on superstitions about [fishing](#), stories about [Fionn Mac Cumhaill](#), traditional [cures](#) and folklore, or other themes.

Typically, Joe would give his listeners the background they needed to understand the context for the songs and stories before performing the items themselves. In addition, Joe often distributed the words to a song which he would then teach the students to sing in chorus, sometimes over a period of several class meetings.

While most of the songs he taught were in English, he also attempted to teach a few of the simpler songs in Irish – songs like [Connla](#) and [Beidh Aonach Amáireach i gContae an Chláir](#) (*‘The Fair of Clare’*), which involve a good deal of repetition as well as having alternative texts in English.<sup>25</sup>

Much of Joe’s time was spent meeting privately with students. While the primary focus of these lessons was meant to be on the student’s learning songs from Joe, student tapes in the Joe Heaney Collection suggest that what went on in these sessions varied considerably.

James Cowdery, who made over forty hours of recordings with Joe at Wesleyan University, was primarily interested in the airs to Joe’s songs, so in many cases Joe sings no more than one or two stanzas of any given song.<sup>26</sup>

Because Cowdery left the tape running throughout their sessions, however, these tapes also contain a good deal of revealing chat about Joe’s experiences, his philosophy, and life in general.

By contrast, tapes made by Jill Linzee, who was writing her master’s dissertation on Joe’s singing for the University of Washington, contain long stretches of well-structured interview; so also do tapes recorded by Esther Warkov, Cynthia Thiessen, Joan Rabinowitz and others.

Seminars, such as those conducted by Kenneth Goldstein before a class of students at the University of Pennsylvania, also provide a glimpse into Joe’s interaction with academics in a more formal setting. Examples from a number of such interviews can be found by searching for the interviewer’s name at the [website](#) honouring Joe Heaney.

Workshops generally focused more on the material than upon Joe himself. On a number of occasions, Joe appeared alongside other singers, affording an opportunity for comparison of variant versions of songs. Several songs, including [Barbary Ellen](#), [Dark is the Colour of My True Love’s Hair](#) and [Seven Drunken Nights](#), were performed during workshops with Mike Seeger; and a video segment of [The Lady in Her Father’s Garden](#) includes a performance by American traditional singer Almeda Riddle followed by Joe singing his version.

Finally, some of the most valuable and revealing of the tapes are those recorded by Lucy Simpson in Brooklyn. Although Lucy was not strictly speaking a student of Joe’s, she did



▲ Almeda Riddle: American traditional singer (Photo: *National Endowment for the Arts*).



▲ Esther Warkov: researcher

embark on a well-defined mission to record as much from him as she could, and was persistent in her pursuit of details about each item, such as where and from whom Joe learned it, and how it fit into his repertoire; one tape even contains a [hint](#) that Lucy and Joe were planning to publish a book of his songs.

As a friend of Joe’s and someone with whom he felt very comfortable, Lucy was able to pursue such information without him perceiving a challenge to his authority, and the relaxed atmosphere encouraged Joe to respond more frankly than he did on other occasions; an excellent example is his [description](#) for Lucy of an actual ‘American Wake’, and of how he decided on what to include in his performance of *The American Wake* at concerts.

Listening to the tapes in the Joe Heaney Collection, it is hard to escape the fact that Joe had developed set-piece introductions for much of his material, as well as stock responses to many questions. He likewise developed a smooth knack of steering conversations away from topics that he preferred to avoid – such as his unfortunate dismissal from school.

The most noticeable feature of his discourse, however, was his habit of digression, one point leading to another until he had strayed far from the original question or point he wished to make. While some of these digressions led to interesting anecdotes or other information, others simply repeated material included elsewhere. ➔

<sup>25</sup> Joe himself composed a set of English verses to *Beidh Aonach Amáireach* and developed a detailed story or *údar* to accompany the song. Favourite English-language songs that he taught to his classes included *I Wish I Had Someone to Love Me*, *Red is the Rose*, and *The Wild Mountain Thyme*.

<sup>26</sup> Cowdery’s study, *The Melodic Tradition of Ireland*, Kent, Ohio, (1990), contains a chapter based on Joe’s singing.





## Repertoire

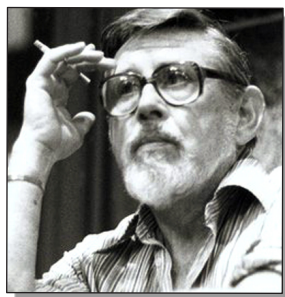
Any assessment of Joe Heaney's repertoire must distinguish between those items that he performed in public – his active repertoire – and items that he had heard from others but did not perform himself.

The [Joe Heaney Collection](#) at the University of Washington contains most of the songs in English that Joe was known to sing. His songs in Irish, however, are not so well represented, because Joe quite understandably focused upon his English repertoire when performing for people with little or no Irish. For this reason, a number of Joe's best-known songs in Irish remain available only on commercial recordings.

Like all traditional singers, Joe sang a wide variety of songs, and didn't pay much attention to where they came from. Although dating is notoriously difficult with this material, the oldest item in his repertoire was probably [Seachrán Chearbhaill](#), an extraordinary composition associated with stories about the legendary poet Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh and his elopement with Eleanor Kavanagh.<sup>27</sup>

Joe's veneration for the religious laments, [Amhrán na Páise](#), [Oíche Nollag](#), and [Caoineadh na d'Trí Muire](#), reflects their close integration within the spiritual practices of his community over many generations. Of more recent vintage would be songs like [The Half-Door](#), [Red-Haired Mary](#) and many of the sentimental songs that focus on emigrant nostalgia.

In addition to the songs in Irish that he learned from family and neighbours at home, we should remember that his father had a great store of songs in English, and Joe recalls seeing broadsheets around the house when he was growing up. One of the songs for which Joe became best known among his students was [I Wish I Had Someone to Love Me](#), his grandmother's only song in English, which appears to have derived from a 1920s American hit by Vernon Dalhart, *The Prisoner's Song*.



▲ Ewan MacColl

The fact that his repertoire was such a mixum-gatherum should in no way be taken as a criticism of Joe's taste. Unlike scholars and folklorists, traditional singers typically care little about the age, lineage or other external aspects of their songs, but simply assemble their repertoire from items that appeal to them.

On one occasion, Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger [asked](#) Joe how he classified songs in his own mind. Joe didn't seem to understand the question at first. It's not clear, for example, that what MacColl and Seeger meant by 'ballad' was how Joe understood the term. Joe's classifications included 'folk-songs, ballads, rebel songs, funny songs, sad songs, lamentable songs, oh different things – every time I sing I try to give a bit of each.'

On that same occasion, Peggy Seeger asked Joe if *Lord Randal* ([An Tiarna Randal](#), one of the few Child ballads to exist in an Irish language variant) meant more to him than *Patrick Sheehan* ([The Glen of Aherlow](#)), because *Lord Randal* is 'such an older song.' Joe responded that both of them have the same sad feeling, even though he knew that *Lord Randal* is older.

It seems clear from this exchange that the relative ages of items in his repertoire were not important to Joe, and that he was unaware – at least when this interview was recorded – of the high status accorded by folklorists and scholars to the classic ballads collected by Francis James Child.

At the same time, there were some songs that, as he explained to Lucy Simpson, Joe [absolutely refused](#) to sing. American audiences were used to hearing songs derived from the Irish music-hall stage, the worst of which made fun of a stereotypical, thick-witted, drunken Paddy and his comical turn of speech. Joe described to Mick Moloney how he chose what to sing at a concert:



▲ Francis James Child: song collector

<sup>27</sup>For discussion, see Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 111–127.



## major scéal: joe heaney

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I try to mix it by giving them a bit of the serious stuff and the not-so-serious stuff, without ever having to do any 'popular' song.... If I have an audience that understands a bit of what I'm doing, then I give them very good stuff, although I never do anything bad, you know, even to a young audience. I try to educate them... because some of these people were... used to songs like *Finnegans Wake*, *Fine Girl You Are*... There's nothing wrong with them songs, but you want to let people know there are other songs... We weren't all drinking all the time. To tell you the truth I very seldom do any drinking song, because if you do people will look at you and say, 'There it is again! The Irish drinking again!' I'm trying to kill that image too, of the Irishman with the drink on the stage. I don't like that image and I never have.<sup>28</sup>

As regards the stories, Joe had strong views about what constituted a story, and what didn't. He [told Jill Linzee](#):

[T]his is what it meant by *inis scéal*, 'tell a story.' You weren't talking about something that happened yesterday or the day before. A story meant you're going back to pre-Christian times. That is a story about the magic of the Dé Danaan, and the Manannán Mac Lir; the man who had the boat who could go under the sea, between the sea and over the sea; the magic horse that Niamh Chinn Óir had when she came from the Land of the Ever-Young to take Fionn Mac Cumhaill's son with her as her husband; the King of Ireland's son going to the East and the Western World, to marry the King of the Western World's daughter; the exploits of him as he went; the embellishments, the runs of the story.

In addition to [hero tales](#) and [Fenian stories](#), Joe told moral tales like [Blessed is the corpse that the rain falls on](#); stories about the Ulster champion [Cú Chulainn](#); stories of the [super-natural](#); stories about animals, such as the one about [the cat with the wooden leg](#); and [tall tales](#) in which he himself plays a role.

In addition, a number of Joe's songs come with significant narratives attached, such as the story of Lynch's son and the Spanish suitors that he tells in connection with the song [The Claddagh Ring](#); the stories relating to Cearbhall



▲ Beached Currachs at Carna



▲ Jill Linzee: researcher

▼ Resting place: the road down to Mairos/Moyrus cemetery near Carna – Joe Heaney's last resting place.



Ó Dálaigh with which he sets the scene for [Eileanóir a Rún](#) and [Seachrán Chearbhaill](#); and the account of the [Death of Cathal Bui Mac Giolla Gunna](#), the poet who composed *An Buinneán Bui*. The international story of *The Three Good Advices* (ATU 910B) is turned into a *chantefable* through its linkage to [Peigin is Peadar](#), an Irish version of *Our Goodman* (Child 274).

What the Joe Heaney Collection lacks, however – and it is a grievous omission – is any complete tale told in Irish, as Joe would have heard them growing up. He does mention the *cóiríú catha* or *culaith ghaisce*, [the battledress](#), an ornamental flourish with which the most important stories typically began, along with an interesting translation of it into English; but apart from this Joe felt constrained to share his repertoire of stories in English only.

One can understand why he did so. The Joe Heaney website has, however, attempted to help redress this imbalance in a small way by posting a few examples of stories collected in Irish from Iorras Aithneach shanachie Michael Tom Mhacaigh Mac Con Iomaire, including [Bás Thadha na Buile](#) (compare Joe's seanchas about the *O'Flahertys*), [Eascann agus Coileach](#) (compare [Joe and the Conger Eel](#)), [Caillleach an Chlocháin](#) (compare [The Hag of the Herbs](#)), and [Nósanna Nollag](#), an account of Christmas customs (compare Joe's introduction to [Oíche Nollag](#)).

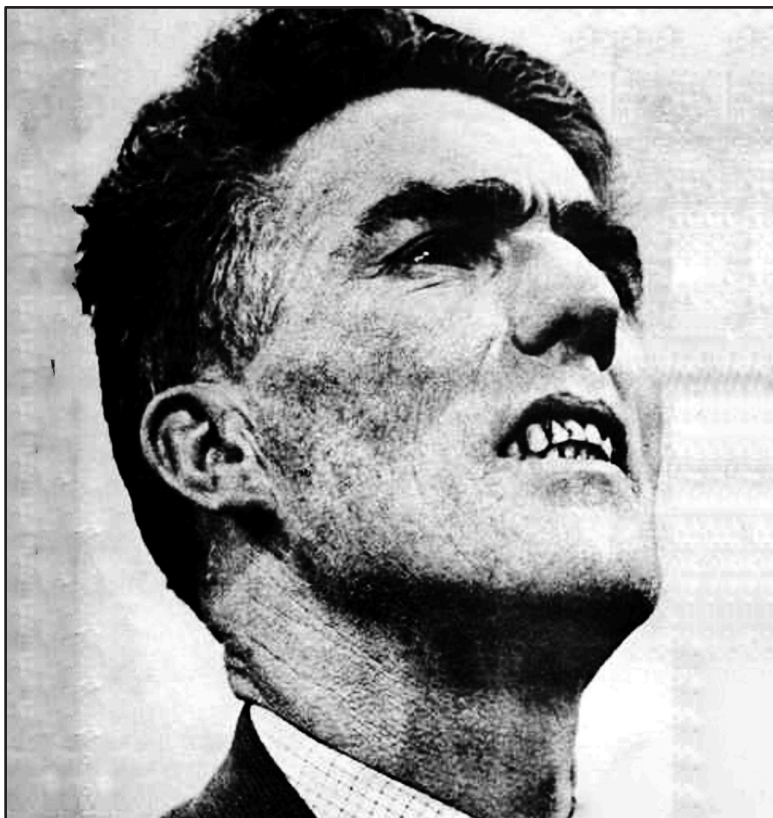
Another story, *Scéal na gCat* (*The King of the Cats*), was one that Joe told in English to school-children at a Seattle primary school; Joe's audio is unavailable online, but a summary of it is included [here](#) along with Michael Tom's Irish rendition.

Joe's students also recorded many items from Joe's passive repertoire – songs to which Joe knew the air and one or two verses, but which he did not sing in public.

Some of these he may have learned at home, but many of them were likely songs he learned from recordings, from other Folk Revival singers, and from printed sources.

<sup>28</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 300–1.



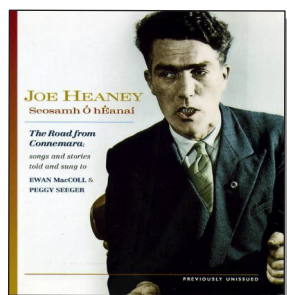


Despite protesting that he had never learned a song from a book, it is clear that Joe was interested in the songs that he found in books, and that he used printed sources to track down additional stanzas to songs that he felt were fragmentary.

Wesleyan University student James Cowdery had the habit of bringing books and lists of songs with him to his meetings with Joe, which helped to remind Joe of songs and airs that might otherwise have escaped him; also, Joe and Lucy Simpson occasionally referred to books that they found in the New York Public Library and elsewhere. In this fashion, songs were teased out of Joe that we would otherwise be unaware that he knew.

Joe's repertoire also contained a number of songs that he doubtless knew well but refused to sing; *Johnny Seoighe* and *Is measa liom Bródach Uí Ghaora* fell into this category, for reasons already mentioned. 'School songs' such as *Beidh Aonach Amárach i gCondae an Chláir*, *Óró, mo Bháidín*, *The Queen of Connemara* and *The Leprachaun Song* Joe found useful as teaching aids in the United States, but he would never have sung them for an Irish audience. Children's songs such as *Óró, a bhuachaillín, seol do bhó*, *Fáilte romhat, a chaipín*, *An tAsailín sa bPáirc*, *An Cat agus a Mháthair*, *Tá Sean-Chat ag mo Mhamái*, and lullabies like *Dún do Shúil* and *Seoithín, seo-hó* were most likely only recorded because researchers sought them out.

Other local songs Joe tended to avoid – either because he thought they were lightweight – 'funny songs for weddings' as he said once – or perhaps because they would require too much background knowledge – or indeed knowledge of the Irish language – for an American audience.



▲ Virginia Blankenhorn

One item from Joe's repertoire is unique. This is a fragment of a *caoineadh* – a lament or 'keen' – recorded from Joe by his friend Liam Clancy, who may have elicited it by asking him about this important tradition. Because they were extemporized during the mourning rituals and uniquely associated with obsequies for the dead, such laments generally reflected characteristics unique to the deceased person, and specific textual elements would therefore not have survived beyond the ritual context.

Consequently, while an outside observer might have described such lamentation as 'song', it probably occupied a wholly different mental category for those involved. For those curious about the keening tradition, the notes provided in conjunction with this item offer considerable food for thought.

Finally, his dogged American interviewers were able to pry loose a few songs, including *An Seandúine Dóite*, *Whiskey-o-roudelum*, and a collection of *Lúibíní*, that Joe is unlikely ever to have sung in a formal setting before mixed company. The second of these, *Whiskey-o-roudelum*, was included on the double CD *The Road from Connemara* (2000), compiled from the tapes made by Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger in their London home in 1963-4. His recording for Esther Warkov, however, is especially entertaining for his glosses on the meaning of the stanzas.

Given the likelihood that Joe knew more songs than he ever recorded, and that items doubtless fell from his repertoire as he progressed through life, it is difficult to estimate the number of songs that would have been in his active repertoire at any given time. The list compiled by Lucy Simpson contained 237 songs, but as she explained:

I suspect he didn't know them all completely. He put about 100 on my eleven tapes. The last time he was in Brooklyn, we met as usual. He recorded some verses to songs he'd given me long before – verses he had not sung the first time!<sup>29</sup>

Joe Heaney's documented repertoire includes 101 songs in Irish; 147 songs with texts in English, including some translated from Irish, as well as a small number of macaronic songs; and 126 spoken items, including stories, tall tales (some featuring Joe himself), traditional lore (*seanchas*), background explanations (*údair*) connected with specific songs, reminiscences, anecdotes, and jokes.<sup>30</sup> The total number of songs – 248 – accords remarkably closely with Lucy Simpson's total, although there may have been items on her list that don't appear here, and vice versa. It seems likely that a substantial number belonged to his passive repertoire.

The third and final article in this series by Virginia Blankenhorn will appear in the next issue of **fonn**.

<sup>29</sup>Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*, 323.

<sup>30</sup>See [here](#) for an inventory of Joe Heaney's commercial recordings.





Frances Wilkins on the  
women who contributed  
to the bardic tradition  
in Gaelic Scotland

41

## scéal mór

### Tobar an Dualchais\*

## The spiritual tradition of the Gàidhealtachd's female bards

**T**he Gàidhealtachd is full of outstanding female bards and singers, and this has been the case throughout history, writes Frances Wilkins.

Names such as Sileas na Ceapaich (c1660-1729), Mary MacDonald (1789-1872) and Màiri Mhòr nan Òran (1821-1898) continue to live on as some of the most impressive and prolific Gaelic bards.

In the Highland tradition, the worldview of poets is steeped in spirituality, and they comfortably bring elements of the sacred into secular compositions and secular imagery into their sacred verse.

There are a wealth of compositions, by both women and men, that focus specifically on the spiritual, and *dàin spioradail* ("spiritual poems") form a substantial corpus within Gaelic verse. In the Presbyterian tradition, while women may lack a voice or authority in the church domain, the domestic environment has been quite different.

Many women have actively composed and sung spiritual songs, and precented psalms in their homes and in their communities. A number of the songs are still sung today. Tobar an Dualchais includes some wonderful examples of spiritual songs composed by female bards.

Here, I'll explore the music of four women who were known for their *bàrdachd*, including the writing of spiritual songs, and whose music can be found in the archives.



▲ Sileas na Ceapaich (Image: Scottish Poetry Library).

These are Sileas na Ceapach from Keppoch, Mary MacDonald from Mull, Catriona Campbell from Lewis, and Christina Morrison from Scalpay, Harris.

Sileas Nighean Mhic Raghnaill (Sileas na Ceapach) (c1660-1729), was from Bohuntin, near Keppoch in Inverness-shire. She was a woman of high social status and the daughter of Gilleasbaig Mac Mhic Raghnaill, the fifteenth chief of the MacDonalds of Keppoch.

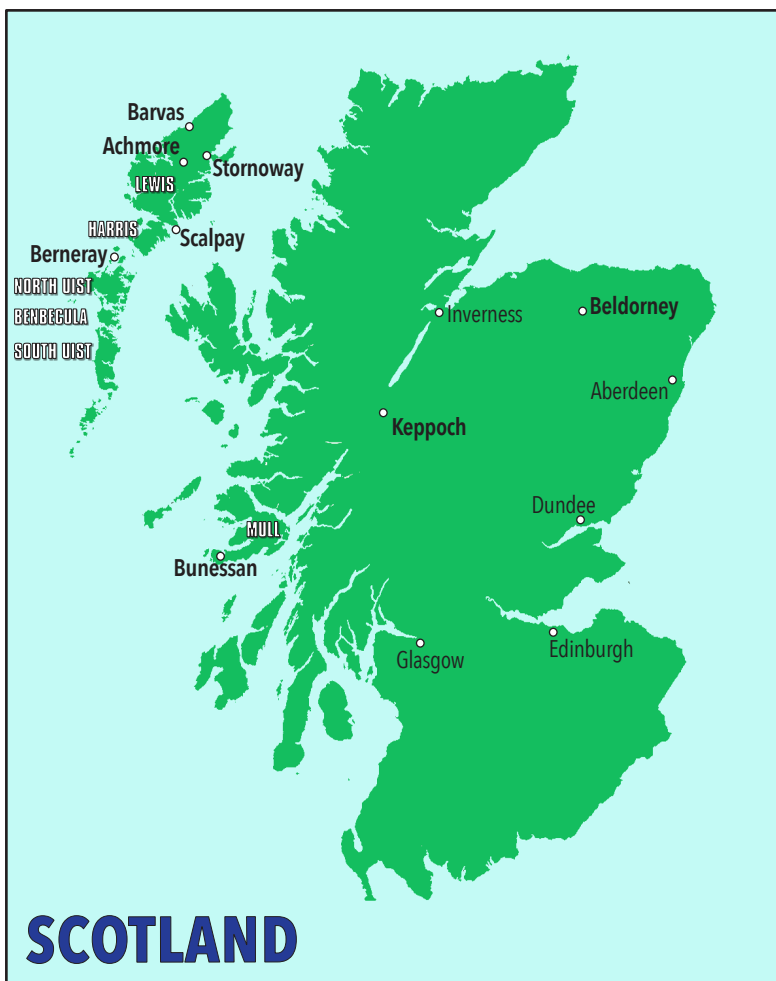
She went on to marry Alexander Gordon of Camdell, the hereditary factor to the Duke of Gordon, and reside with him in Beldorney Castle in Banffshire. She was a prolific poet and greatly admired in her time. Most of her compositions, in vernacular Gaelic, were passed down through oral tradition.

Sileas na Ceapach composed on many subjects including politics and religion, and was particularly well known for writing laments. Her Roman Catholic faith was clearly present within her spiritual song compositions and one her hymns, *'S e do Bheatha Mhoire Mhaighdean* ('Hail to Thee, Virgin Mary') was popular in Hebridean Catholic communities well into the twentieth century.

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\*Tobar an Dualchais/Kist o Riches is Scotland's online resource dedicated to the preservation and promotion of audio recordings of Scotland's cultural heritage. The website contains material from three archives: the School of Scottish Studies, the Canna Collection and BBC Radio nan Gàidheal with recordings in Gaelic, Scots and English. The recordings mostly consist of songs, music, history, poetry, traditions and stories, recorded from the 1930s onwards. The principal aim of Tobar an Dualchais/Kist o Riches is to ensure that this rich oral heritage is safeguarded and made widely available for present and future generations. In order to identify the songs and recordings cited in the article, the Tobar an Dualchais reference numbers (TAD ID) are used.



Tobar an Dualchais alone has at least nine versions of the hymn, recorded from various contributors in Benbecula and South Uist.

One example is Fanny MacIsaac from Torlum in Benbecula, who was recorded singing the hymn in October 1950 (TAD ID 26401) and another is Marion Campbell from Frobost in South Uist in 1957 (TAD ID 44595).

The hymn is addressed to and in praise of the Virgin Mary, as are a number of hymns in the Catholic tradition, but in this composition she also tells the story of the life of Jesus from birth until his death on the cross.

The full hymn is an impressive 40 quatrains sung as twenty 8-line verses. While I didn't hear the hymn during my own fieldwork on the islands in 2021-2023, I notice that it does feature in the hymnbook, *Seinnibh dhan Tighearna* (no.77), which was published in 1984 and is in use in churches on the islands.

There were a number of popular Christmas hymns composed in the Gaelic tradition. Perhaps the most well-known of all is *Leanabh an Àigh* ('Child of Joy'), written by Mary MacDonald (1789-1872) from the Isle of Mull and sung to the traditional tune, *Bunessan*, which is named after the village where she lived.

The melody went on to become famous worldwide as the tune of the popular English hymn, *Morning Has Broken*.



▲ Song collector, Calum Iain MacLean



▲ Award-winning traditional singer, Torquil MacLeod from Stornoway (Photo: Torquil MacLeod).

However, it has changed hugely since *Leanabh an Àigh* was composed in the early 1800s. An example of a version which must be quite close to the original is sung by Donald Morrison (1885-1986), a crofter and fisherman who was born and raised in Ardtun, Bunessan – very close to where Mary MacDonald had lived.

This was recorded by Calum Iain MacLean in 1953 and is the only recording of the hymn that I could find in the Tobar an Dualchais archive (TAD ID 4768).

### Oral tradition

Most of Mary MacDonald's songs existed only in oral tradition and were never written down.

Because of this, there is very little we know of the breadth and depth of her writing, and much is believed to have been lost.

However, there are a couple of other examples of her writing in Tobar an Dualchais including a short extract of *Ciamar a Dh'fhaodas Mi Gun a Bhith A' Labhairt Air* (How Can I Not Talk About It') (TAD ID 4800), and a humorous song, *Sioman Donn, Fada Donn* (TAD ID 353).

Both were sung by Neil MacLean, a crofter and forestry worker, also from Ardtun, Bunessan, in 1953 and recorded by Calum Iain MacLean.

It is amazing to see that the recordings of her songs all came from the place where she had lived, showing an ongoing appreciation of her poetry in the place of her birth.

Moving forward to the twentieth century, the 1949-52 awakening in Lewis and Harris, witnessed a great outpouring of spiritual song compositions.

Many songs emerging at this time were written by people who were entirely new to *bàrdachd*. Catriona Campbell (née Smith) from the west side of Lewis and Christina Morrison from Scalpay, Harris, were two such writers. Catriona Campbell was born into a crofting family in Upper Shader, Barvas, in 1931.

She was converted during the awakening as a young woman and was moved and encouraged to express her feelings in song. Later she married and moved with her family to Stornoway, working as a cleaner in the post and sorting office.

Song writing stayed with her throughout her life and her spiritual compositions including *O Mo Chlann* ('O My Children'), which was written about her hopes for her children, and *O 'S E Ìosa Fear Mo Ghràidh* ('O, Jesus Is My Beloved') are still sung to this day. She was a beautiful singer, too, and was recorded by the BBC singing *O Mo Chlann*.

The recording is unfortunately not available on Tobar an Dualchais but it is still in the BBC archives and is available to be requested on programmes such as the Friday night *Dùrachdan* on BBC Radio nan Gaidheal.

Tobar an Dualchais does currently have one recording of *O Mo Chlann*, sung by Torquil MacLeod from Stornoway who sang it at the Royal National Mòd in Lairgs in 2002 (TAD ID 96558).

Torquil explained to me during an interview in 2022 that:

*Catriona composed many spiritual songs which would never be used in church worship, but would be sung in companies, in gatherings.*



*When you read her poetry and sing her songs, they resonate with you. It's not just the language, there's a great spiritual input in them.*

*They speak from the heart.*

### Revival

O'S E lsa Fear Mo Ghràidh is a hymn about the love and support offered by Jesus Christ. It is described by Magaidh Smith, from Achmore, Lewis, as showing 'the faith which underpins this community', and is one of Campbell's better-known compositions.

It is one of the many revival songs framed around *Fear Mo Ghràidh*, 'The Beloved' of the Song of Solomon (5:1-4). Rachel MacLeod of Berneray, Harris, was recorded singing this in 1980, at the age of 71, by Ian Paterson, also from Berneray, who was at that time a lecturer and fieldworker for the School of Scottish Studies (TAD ID 105508).

The fact that this song was sung as far south as Berneray shows that Campbell's composition was not just known in her local community but had spread out to other parts of the Hebrides.

Christina Morrison (1886-1972), a hymn writer from the island of Scalpay, Harris, was from a family of well-known bards from the island. Her husband, Donald Morrison (1886-1952) was known to have composed outstanding hymns, and her son, D.R. Morrison, was a journalist, writer and highly respected poet who was crowned bard at the National Mòd in 1958.

Christina herself was a gifted poet. Her hymn, *Tha an Gràdh Seo Cho Laidir* ('This Love Is So



▲ Catriona Campbell (Photo: colourised version of Nan Smith original)

Strong'), which describes the ways that God's love is shown to us humans, has become very popular. It begins: 'This love is so strong, death can neither touch it nor overcome it'.

Morag MacLeod, the folklorist from Scalpay, states that 'any preacher could be well pleased to have produced such a sermon. In terms of popularity, the song would equal *Amazing Grace* in proportion to the comparative potential audience size' (MacLeod, 2023).

There are four recordings of the song in the archives of Tobar an Dualchais, two of which were recorded by Morag MacLeod, herself. They are all beautiful examples such as the versions sung by Morag MacLeod (not the same person) in 1957 (TAD ID 101171) and Christine Morrison in 1940 (TAD ID 67279) both from Stornoway.

The song is clearly suited to solo singing and stands out as a unique composition and contribution to the corpus of Gaelic spiritual songs. There are many other wonderful female bards in this tradition, and their influences have been long-lasting.

Some of their work has remained at a local level while the poetry of others, such as Mary MacDonald's *Leanabh an Aigh*, has become widespread across Scotland and beyond.

Spirituality has been so integrated in the Highlands that it is hard to detach one from the other.

The spiritual poetry of female bards can give us a precious insight into the concerns and experiences of Highland women at the time as well as shed light on their personal approaches to religion and spirituality.

f

**Seinn Spioradail**  
Sacred Soundscapes of the Highlands & Islands

SKYE AND LOCHALSH ARCHIVES,  
PORTREE, ISLE OF SKYE  
22 JUNE-8 NOVEMBER 2024

© Mairi M. Martin  
"Psalms on a summer evening", Manish Church, Isle of Harris

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. Frances Wilkins (left) is a senior lecturer in ethnomusicology at the Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen. Her research focuses on music and belief in Northern Scotland, as well as fiddle and dance traditions in Scotland and Canada.

Information on her latest project, *Seinn Spioradail: Sacred Soundscapes of the Highlands and Islands*, is now available at [www.seinn.org](http://www.seinn.org).



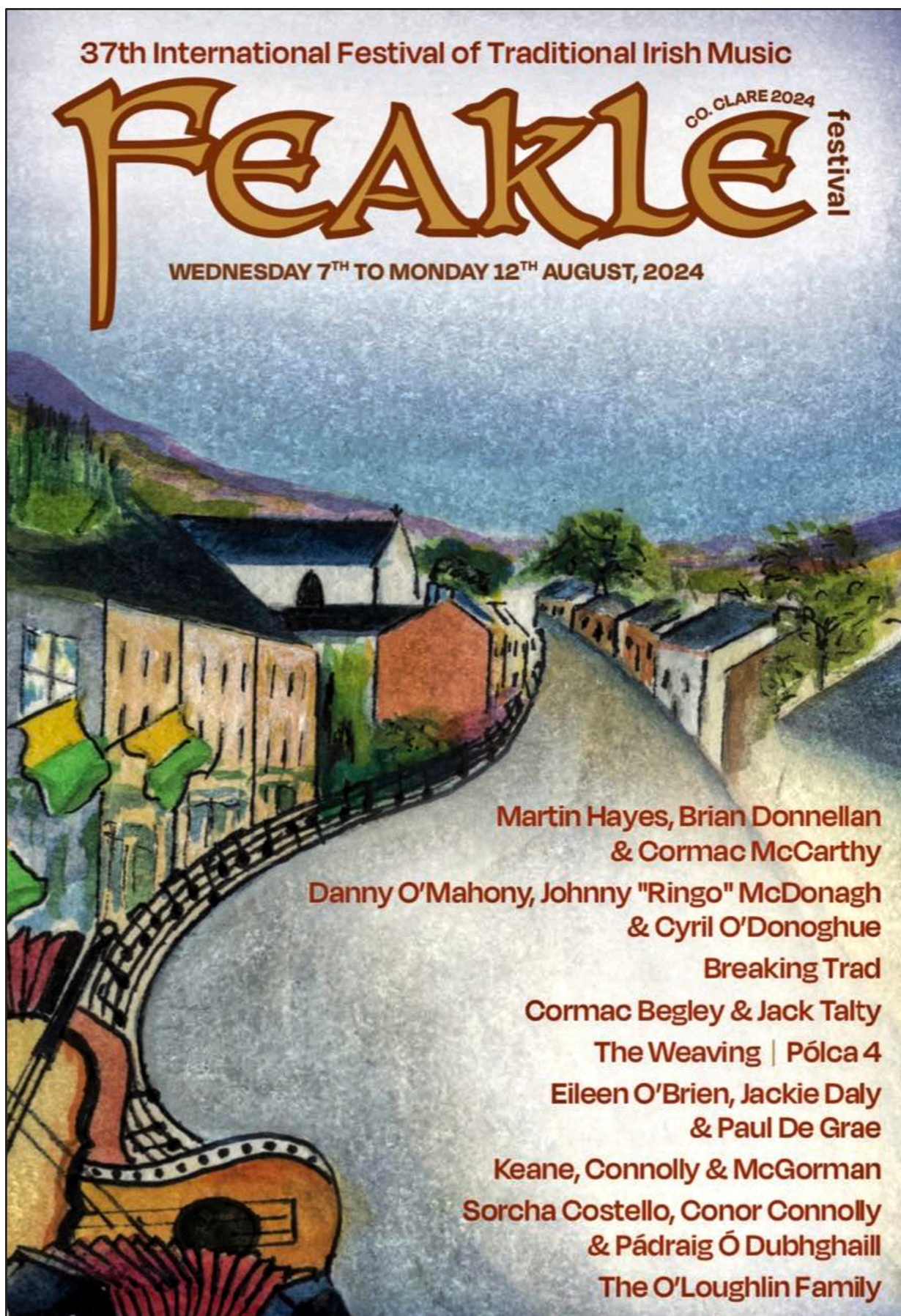


37th International Festival of Traditional Irish Music

# FEAKLE

CO. CLARE 2024 festival

WEDNESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> TO MONDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2024



Martin Hayes, Brian Donnellan  
& Cormac McCarthy

Danny O'Mahony, Johnny "Ringo" McDonagh  
& Cyril O'Donoghue

Breaking Trad

Cormac Begley & Jack Talty

The Weaving | Pólca 4

Eileen O'Brien, Jackie Daly  
& Paul De Grae

Keane, Connolly & McGorman

Sorcha Costello, Conor Connolly  
& Pádraig Ó Dubhghaill

The O'Loughlin Family



Oxford  
Handbook  
of Irish Song  
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Anna John Chiot's  
Sean Nós Song  
Collection  
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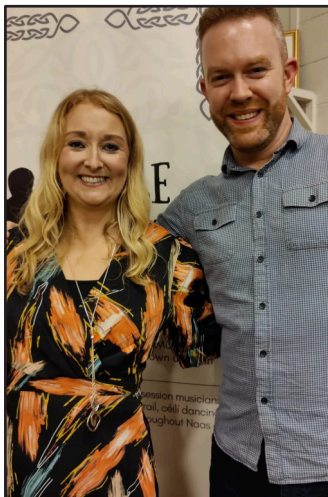
## sight reading



## PURCELL'S WEB OVERTURES

### NEW SITE HOSTS SANDIE'S 180 COMPOSITIONS

Kildare fiddler and composer, Sandie Purcell, recently launched a new website with 180 of her compositions – including notation for all of the tunes along with recordings by master musicians including piper Mark Redmond, fiddler Zoë Conway, piper and flute player Louise Mulcahy, box player Derek Hickey and concertina player Caitlín Nic Gabhann.



◀ **Tribute:** Sandie Purcell (left) with Mark Redmond at the premiere of *The Open Road* – her tribute to the late Liam O'Flynn.

The repertoire presented on the website includes a range of styles including jigs, reels, hornpipes, slow airs, slides, and two long-form pieces for solo pipes.

While welcoming the presence of these masters of their craft contributing samples of her work, Purcell's ambition is for at least one of her compositions to be accepted into the canon of traditional airs performed regularly at sessions and in concerts.

"I hope that anyone who visits the website can find something that they wish to learn, play and pass on," she said.

At the formal launch of the site in Na Piobairí Uilleann's Dublin head-

quarters, musician and researcher, Terry Moylan, observed that the collection would "enrich our music in many ways – contributing new material and setting an example of what Irish composers and Irish music are capable of."

#### The Composer's Life

Having started learning the fiddle at the age of seven, Sandie showed an early aptitude for composition – winning the IMRO Composition Award at the age of thirteen with the jig, *The Crooked Picture*.

After studying at the DIT Conservatory of Music and completing an MA in Composition at DCU along with a diploma in Primary Education, she worked at Na Piobairí Uilleann between 2008 and 2013 where she began learning the pipes with NPU Chief Executive, Gay McKeon.

In 2007, she published *101 Original Compositions of Irish Traditional Music* followed by the album *The Crooked Picture* in 2008 with the band Reelan.

With her growing familiarity with the pipes, she received a Dublin City Council commission from to write a piece for solo pipes to commemorate the millennium of the Battle of Clontarf in April 1014. The piece was performed by Mark Redmond in April 2014.

Purcell's tunes have also appeared in the NPU magazine, *An Piobaire*, and in *The Indignant Muse, Poetry and Songs of the Irish Revolution 1887–1926*, a collection of songs, poetry and prose edited by Terry Moylan.

In 2022 she was commissioned to write a piece in memory of the late Liam O'Flynn for the inaugural Féile Liam O'Flynn – which was again premiered by Mark Redmond. She was the Irish Traditional Music Archive's 'Composer of the Month' in its Saothar series in 2022.

She also recently published *New Songs from Old Stories: New Piping Pieces and Ballad Airs*, a collection of mostly old verse selected by Terry Moylan which she then set to music.

The complete collection of tunes is available on Sandie Purcell's website: <https://sandiepurcell.com>.



## NEW SONG HANDBOOK IMPORTANT LANDMARK IN MODERN SCHOLARSHIP

The recently published *Oxford Handbook of Irish Song 1100-1850* is a landmark publication on the history of singing in Ireland. The project includes essays from thirty-six distinguished and emerging scholars on a broad range of song styles and topics.

The handbook has been edited by Dr. Conor Caldwell (Irish World Academy of Music and Dance), Professor Moyra Haslett (Queen's University, Belfast) and Professor Lillis Ó Laoire (Ollscoil na Gaillimhe).

### Contents

- Vocal Music in Medieval Ireland: the Textual and Linguistic Evidence – *Fergus Kelly*
- 'Out of a Reverie, and as if Giving Unconscious Expression to a Deep Internal Feeling': Women's Clothmaking Songs in Gaelic Tradition – *Sorcha Nic Lochlainn*
- 'Masterpieces of their Kind': the Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Reception of the Songs of Carolan – *Lesa Ní Mhunghaile*
- Ceremonial Song in Eighteenth-Century Dublin: Cousser's and Dubourg's Odes and Serenatas – *Estelle Murphy*
- Swift and Song – *Andrew Carpenter*
- Canfar an Dán: The Songs of the Eighteenth-Century Gaelic Literary Poets – *Éamonn Ó Bróithe*
- Irish Traditional Songs in Print and Performance: Laurence Whyte's 1740 Selection of Irish Song – *Moyra Haslett*
- 'The Best English-Irish Poetry before Yeats': Late Eighteenth-Century Irish Songs in English – *John Moulden*
- Irish Theatrical Song in the Eighteenth Century – *Ciara Conway*
- Robert Owenson's Macaronic Song Repertoire and the Dublin Theatre

- Audience of the Late Eighteenth Century – *Helen Burke*
- Aspects of Irish-Language Song Transmission in Munster, 1700-1850 – *Ciarán Ó Gealbháin*
- Civic and Urban Performance of Song: Cork 1750-1850 – *Susan O'Regan*
- Ulster-Scots Song – *Frank Ferguson*
- The Irish-Language Traditional Song Collection of Patrick Lynch, 1802-1803 – *Nicholas Carolan*
- Irish Song of the Early Nineteenth Century, as Transcribed by James Cody – *Colette Moloney*
- 'Our Finest and Most Popular Airs Are Modern': Thomas Moore on Irish Song – *Joanne Burns*
- The Politicization of the Harp through Moore's Irish Melodies – *Una Hunt*
- The Cultural Response to Moore's Irish Melodies in Nineteenth-Century Paris – *Triona O'Hanlon*
- Collecting Irish Song, 1797-1855 – *Sinéad Sturgeon*
- George Petrie (1790-1866) as a Collector of Irish Song – *David Cooper*
- 'Their lamentable hone': Irish Women's Funerary Song in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries – *Marie-Louise Coolahan and Wes Hamrick*
- William Carleton, Irish Song, and the Art of Keening – *Brian Earls*

- A Study of the Agallamh Tradition: Two Munster Agallaimh (Dialogue Songs) Collected by James Goodman – *Miriam Uí Dhoneabháin*
- Jacobite Sentiment in Eighteenth-Century Irish Poetry, in Word and in Song – *Úna Nic Éinrí and Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill*
- Political Song in the Age of Revolution – *Terry Moylan*
- Fearless Song: Máire Bhui Ní Laeire (1774-c.1848) – *Triona Ní Shíocháin*
- Literacy and Orality in Traditional Irish Song: Revisiting a Life's Work – *Julie Henigan*
- Irish Song and the Idea of Tradition – *Virginia Blankenhorn*
- 'Fearann Oirghiall Ghlúnmhár Ghrínn': Rediscovering the Oriel Gaelic Song Tradition – *Gearóid Trimble*
- Diamonds that on Rocks Do Grow: Revision, Language, and Memory in the Ballad, *Belfast Mountains* (c.1813-1820) – *Scott McKendry*
- Poetry and Performance in the Gaelic World, c.1200-c.1650 – *Micheál B. Ó Mainnín*
- Song Lyrics and Melodies in the Edward Bunting Collection – *Eilis Lavelle*
- Between Vulgarly and Beauty in the Interstices of Orality and Literacy – *Lillis Ó Laoire and Sean Williams*





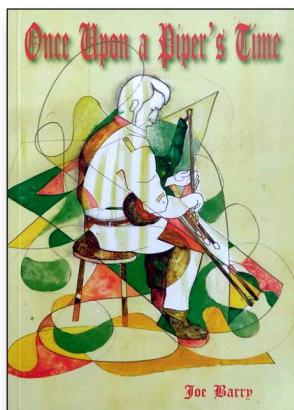
▲ Piping up: Joe Barry (Photo: Odhran Dúcie).

## LIVING THE PIPE DREAM

In his biography, Joe Barry reflects on his musical life, playing both uilleann and highland pipes.

*Once Upon a Piper's Time* opens with Joe's memories of his early life in Templemore and his first experiences of traditional music. Joe details the 1956 visit of his mother's first cousin Bill Crowe from Australia.

Bill arrived in Ireland with his fiddle and an Egan set of pipes that had belonged to John Coughlan.



Bill's visit provided Joe with his first opportunity to try the uilleann pipes and ignited a lifelong interest.

Joe goes on to detail his early experiences of learning the pipes and the relationship his family developed with Dan O'Dowd.

The book also recalls many of Joe's musical experiences at events around the country over the years.

For over thirty years, along with Brendan Collins, Joe has organised the Templemore Tionól and the book contains many reflections on the pipers and musicians who have taken part in the Tionól over the years.

Much of the book is also dedicated to the fifty-six years that Joe has spent with the Thomas McDonagh Pipe Band as a piper and as Pipe Major.

The book also includes a song, *The Quintinshill Rail Disaster*, one of a number of songs Joe has written.

Proceeds of the book will go to Lough Derg RNLI.



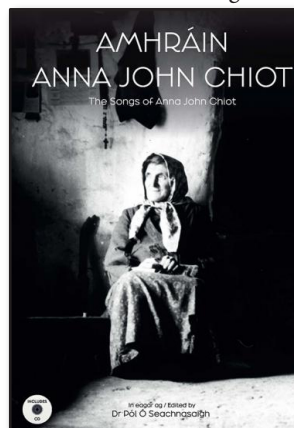
▲ Anna John Chiot: Painting by Simon Coleman, 1949 (Photo: UCD Library).

## SEAN-NÓS FROM THE BLUE STACKS

Anna Nic an Luain or Anna John Chiot from the Blue Stack Mountains in County Donegal was one of the Irish Folklore Commission's most important sources of tales, poetry and lore from its foundation in 1935.

Her repertoire included 128 songs, and includes long and short songs, together with verses and parts of other songs.

Edited by the well-known fiddler Pól Ó Seachnasaigh,



*Amhráin Anna John Chiot* contains, for the first time, all of the songs collected from Anna John Chiot by the Commission's field recorders: Liam Mac Meanman (between the years 1935 and 1937) and Seán Ó hEochaidh (from 1947 to 1948).

When Seán Ó hEochaidh was collecting in Donegal, Anna was in her sixties and in failing health. She had to recite the songs without melodies.

So Ó Seachnasaigh invited six well-known sean-nós singers to put the words of some of the songs to traditional melodies from Donegal.

Sean-nós singers, Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde, Máire Ní Choilm, Anna Ní Mhaonaigh, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Brian Ó Domhnaill and Lillis Ó Laoire, have recorded a total of 21 songs – which are included on a CD which accompanies the book. These songs are also available on Soundcloud.

The book is available from It from the Four Courts Press at [www.fourcourtspress.ie](http://www.fourcourtspress.ie).

One of the most prolific and esteemed among the living composers of music in the traditional style is the Clare-based multi-instrumentalist, Josephine Marsh – whose achievements were formally recognised in 2020 with the award of the TG4 Gradam Ceoil for Composer of the Year.

So there has been genuine excitement at the news that she is publishing *111 Original Irish Music Compositions* – a collection which includes reels, jigs, hornpipes, slip jigs, polkas, waltzes, barndances, planxties and slow airs.

The A4-sized book includes explanatory stories to accompany the tunes as well as appropriate sketches and photographs.

The compositions are presented in Western Art notation and also in a simple ABC notation. The book also includes a link to an audio file of the music which can be downloaded from the internet.

#### For the record

Over the years, Josephine has recorded a selection of these tunes on four albums: *To Meet a Friend*, *Josephine Marsh*, *I Can Hear You Smiling* and *Music in the Frame*.

Her tunes have been recorded by a large variety of musicians, including Michael McGoldrick and John McSherry, Cherish the Ladies, The London Lassies, The Yanks, Mick Hanly, Niamh Parsons, Seán Tyrrell, Seán Garvey, Pádraig Rynne and Michelle Mulcahy.

Many of her tunes have made their way into the traditional canon with particular reference to *Phyllis's Birthday*, the planxty *Anna Foxe* and *Matthew's Waltz*.



## JOSEPHINE MARSH IN HER OWN WRITE

### MARSH LAUNCHES NEW BOOK WITH COLLECTION OF 101 COMPOSITIONS

▲ On the box:  
Josephine Walsh.

◀ New book: 111  
Original Irish Music  
Compositions by  
Josephine Walsh.

Born in London, Josephine Marsh has been living in Clare since the age of four. She began to develop an interest in writing tunes in the late 1980s. She is best known as an accordionist but plays and composes on a wide variety of instruments including concertina, fiddle, banjo and tin whistle.

Over the years Josephine has been commissioned by various bodies such as RTE Radio, ITMA and Music Network to compose music including *Into a Brighter Day*, *A Naomh Brid*, *Planxty for Ceol O' Kylemore*, *The Coffee House* and *Spideog*.

In 2003 she was the Musician in Residence in Mountshannon, Co. Clare and composed the score for the production, *The Music of Ghosts*, by P. J. Curtis.

Among the many endorsements for the book from fellow musicians

comes this from Gradam award winning fiddler, Kevin Burke:

*Josephine's tunes have a maturity and wisdom about them that suggests they have been around for years, waiting to be handed down to us willing players. This collection is to be treasured, a wonderful testament to her immense musical talent.*

Another Gradam winner, harpist Laoise Kelly, added:

*Josephine's compositions are extremely inventive and innovative with a stream of tiny variations but yet still sounding traditional. Josephine composes with individual style, grace and spirit. Even after learning the notes, they still reveal secrets in each recounting.*

Costing €35, the book is available from <https://josephinemarshmusic.com/store>.







**West  
Kerry's  
Cuas**  
Page 50

**Moya...  
Harps and  
Flowers**  
Page 51



## sound check



▲ Tradition Beara: Robert Harvey (left) and Tara Viscardi

## CELEBRATING THE BEARA PENINSULA'S FAUNA, FLORA AND FOLKLORE

**B**eara pairs contemporary compositions inspired by the Beara Peninsula with tunes collected and written on the peninsula since the 18th century. It also draws inspiration from the legend of Princess Beara, daughter of the King of Castile, who is said to have sailed to Ireland to marry Owen Mór, King of Ireland, around 120 AD.

Through the music, Tara Viscardi on harp and Robert Harvey on flute aim to capture the rugged terrain and spirit of the landscape named by Owen Mór in honour of his wife.



Tara's compositions are largely inspired by the natural beauty of her homeplace of Lauragh and touch on the universal themes of homecoming and belonging as well as being influenced by local folklore.

The dance music composed by the Dwyer family of Caolrua, further down the peninsula between Eyeries and Ardgroom are a crucial addition to the album.

Further folk tales published in the Beara Book of Wonders inspired a set of slip jigs and a jig, *The Humours of Ardgroom*, notated in the eponymous town between 1861-1866 by James Goodman is also included.

*O'Sullivan's March*, which is widely believed to depict the epic march of Donal Cam O'Sullivan Beare and his followers from Beara to Leitrim at the beginning of the 17th century completes the selection.

The environment in which a record is made is integral to the feel of the album: so the duo decided to record in Dawros

Church on the Beara peninsula at Halloween to capture the spirit of the place.

At times, the rain can be heard pelting the rafters above them; sometimes the birds join in the distance.

The album is tastefully produced by Laoise O'Brien: it is also beautifully presented with cover art by Tara's father Claudio Viscardi.

The album is available in CD format and/or as a digital download from <https://beara.band-camp.com/album/beara>

### Track Listing:

1. Beara Prelude
2. Tilleadh
3. O'Sullivan's March/The Crane
4. The Humours of Ardgroom
5. Midnight over Glanmore Lake
6. Glenbeg Lake/Dursey Sound
7. Beara's Voyage
8. Samhradh
9. The Woman in the Boat/The Fairy Child
10. Moon Over Kilcatherine
11. My Beara Fair

## SIDE TRACKS

Pat Fleming Steve Cooney Timmy O'Connor



## TABLE MANNERS

On *Tunes from Toureendarby* box playing maestri, Timmy O'Connor and Pat Fleming, join guitarist and keyboard player, Steve Cooney, to combine authentic old Sliabh Luachra music with a modern accompaniment.

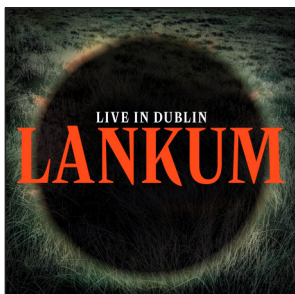
The album's dozen tracks – including slides, polkas, reels, waltzes and barndances – were recorded at Timmy's kitchen in Toureendarby, Co. Cork and produced by Steve at his studio in Teelin, Co. Donegal.



## HAPPY BARBARA

The debut album of multi-instrumentalist and singer, Barbara Koenig, *Little Happiness* is an unusual collection of songs – traditional and contemporary – with unique versions of well-known songs and self-penned pieces, from diverse sources like Andy Irvine, Carole King, Hozier and others. Barbara's soothing voice and her accomplished guitar and bouzouki, delivers an album of enchanting quality.



SIDE  
TRACKS

## LANKUM LIVE IN DUBLIN

Recorded across three sold out nights at Dublin's Vicar Street, following the release of their fourth studio album, *False Lankum*, this new album, *Live in Dublin*, features Lankum performing songs from across their back catalogue including *The Rocky Road To Dublin*, which up until this point had never been officially released.

The remaining tracks on the album are: *The Young People*, *The Rocky Road to Dublin*, *The Pride of Petravore*, *On a Monday Morning*, *Go Dig My Grave*, *Hunting the Wren*, *Fugue* and *Bear Creek*.



## ROBERT'S DEBUT

*Ri Taobh a' Chuain* is the debut EP from singer and traditional musician Robert John MacInnes, from the Highlands of Scotland – a semi-finalist in last year's BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year. The recording draws mainly on Robert's Gaelic repertoire with *O'S Toil 'S Gur Rò Thoil Leam*, *An Roghainn*, *Smeòrach Clann Dòmhmaill*, *Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond* and *An Ataireachd Àrd*.



## A TOUCH OF CUAS

## CAPTURING THE ESSENCE OF THE MUSIC OF WEST KERRY

The music, song and dance of West Kerry is characterised by a sense of freedom, wildness and passion – which the recently formed Cuas has tried to capture as closely as possible on record by emulating the spirit of a live performance.

So they invited fifty friends, family members, set dancers, and enthusiastic strangers to Seanscoil a' Chuasa, an old schoolhouse in Cuas a' Bhodaigh to join them in a night of celebrating local music, song, and dance.

This debut album of fourteen tracks gives a sense of the energy and warmth evident in abundance on that evening.

Formed last year, Cuas are Méabh Ní Bheaglaoich (accordion and vocals), Nicole Ní Dubhshláine (concertina and flute), Niamh Variah-Barry (fiddle, viola and vocals), and Kyle Macauley (guitar and bouzouki).

Inspired by the emotive songs and the vibrant dance traditions

of West Kerry, the group has been appearing at festivals around the country and on national television – including programmes like *Fáilte 2024* and *Bláth na hÓige*.

Invigorating polkas and slides, native songs and thoughtful new compositions abound in this collaboration by four of the country's most promising young musicians.

"To us, traditional music is about the inexplicable and intangible connection between performer and listener," they say.

"For an audience present at a passionate and soulful presentation of traditional music, the experience can be truly life changing."



The album is available as a CD and/or download on Bandcamp at <https://cuas.bandcamp.com/album/cuas>.

## Track Listing

1. Sleamhnáin Deálai/The Peeler and the Goat
2. Miss Admiral Gordon's/O'Sullivan's/Mairtín O'Connor's
3. Jimmy Mo Mhíle Stór
4. Cuileann Uí Chaoimh/Paddy Joe Tighe's/The Providence
5. Old Torn Petticoat that I Bought in Mullingar/Cuz Teahan's/Peadar Ó Riada's
6. Dusty Little Wings
7. Sebastiaan's Fancy/The Knights' Fancy/Ril Mhary-Ellen
8. Fead an Fhiolair/Máirseáil Uí Shúilleabháin/John Brosnan's #2/The Ceanngulla
9. Keys to the Convent/Sliabh Mis
10. An Laoch Beag
11. The Dainty Dish Before the King/Nelly Cleere's/Polca John Teairní
12. An Cailín Bán
13. The Margarita Waltz/Poitin March/Páidín Ó Raifeartaigh
14. Polca Deálai/The Roundabout Polka



▼ Harps on their sleeves: Moya Brennan (left) and Cormac de Barra.



# HARPS AND FLOWERS

## BRENNAN AND DE BARRA IN MUSICAL BOUQUET FOR MARY O'HARA

The new album from Moya Brennan and Cormac De Barra - *Voices & Harps IV* - is a tribute to Mary O'Hara, the singer and harpist who, in a lifelong career, has brought Irish songs and music to a world-wide audience, through performances in major venues like Carnegie Hall, the Royal Albert Hall and the Sydney Opera House as well as contributing to 29 albums.

### Track Listing

1. An Mairín Rua
2. Song of Fionnuala
3. Aililiú na Gamhna
4. An Caitín Bán
5. Garton Mother's Lullaby
6. The Spinning Wheel
7. Eibhlín a Rúin
8. Kitty of Coleraine
9. She Lived beside the Anner
10. Lord of the Dance
11. Ailiú Éanaí

*Voices & Harps IV* draws on Mary's song repertoire – both in English and Irish – including *Lord of the Dance*, *The Spinning Wheel*, *Song of Fionnuala* (Silent O Moyle) and *An Mairín Rua*.

Moya Brennan has been the principal voice of the now retired family band, Clannad from Donegal, while Cormac is a Dubliner with Cork roots with an reputation as a harpist – winning the Féis Ceoil Harp Competition in 1989.

As well as performing as a soloist and in duos, Cormac has toured with Clannad, and has been a member of Julie Feeney's

band as well as of his own family trio, Barcó. He partnered with Moya in Volumes 1, 2 and 3 of the *Voices & Harps* series.

Mary O'Hara's music was influential in encouraging a generation of Irish musicians during the folk revival of the 1960s – including Moya, herself, who was inspired to take up the harp.

Cormac de Barra's connection goes back to O'Hara's first ever professional tour to Britain in 1954, when she was part of a harp trio with Cormac's grandmother and his grand-aunt, Máirín (who was Mary's harp teacher). The two women also served as sources for Mary's extensive repertoire of songs in Irish.

So Moya and Cormac are drawing from that repertoire and giving new life to songs from the canon, with new arrangements and with support on the album from multi-instrumentalist, Shahab Coohé, of the highly acclaimed

Irish-Persian ensemble, Nava.

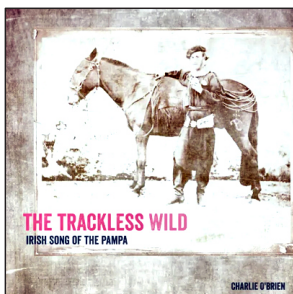
Moya and Cormac hope to tour the album – revisiting some of the scenes of Mary O'Hara's concert triumphs in Britain, Europe and beyond.

So all of these connections – musical, personal and familial – have come together in this special project in honour of a seminal musical performer.



▲ **Award:** Mary O'Hara awarded an honorary doctorate from UCD in 2022 (Photo: Chris Bellew/Fennell Photography).



SIDE  
TRACKS

## PAMPA SONGS

In *The Trackless Wild: Irish Song of the Pampa*, Charlie O'Brien explores the forgotten tradition of Irish-Argentine balladry. The album's lyrics were resurrected from the pages of an old newspaper, *El Monitor de la Campaña*. Many of the lyrics had obvious Irish airs associated with them, like Donovan's *Mount*, which specified *Lannigan's Ball* as the air. For those with no obvious melody, O'Brien created one, or chose a traditional air, like *The Mountains of Pomeroy* (for *The Pampa's Fairest Child*).



## THE BITTER

Cerys Hafana is a composer and multi-instrumentalist who "mangles, mutates and transforms traditional music."

Their atmospheric mini five-track album of English and Scottish folk songs (with some Welsh poetry added for good measure) offers an intriguingly dark take on five songs from the canon – *The Bitter Withy*, *Child Owlet*, *The Lyke Wake Dirge*, *The Wife of Usher's Well* and *Willy o' Winsbury* – the latter with a Welsh verse spoken by Iestyn Tyne.



## INTO THE SETTING SUN

**Setting Sun**, the highly anticipated recording from Scottish folk five-piece, the Paul McKenna band, is its *homage* to the folk tradition – with its unique arrangements on some of the most cherished songs in their repertoire.

*Setting Sun* sees the band apply their expressive style to a host of classics, adding their own contemporary, transatlantic spin on the material, while acknowledging some of their major musical influences.

On this six-track recording, the band – made up of Paul McKenna (vocals, guitar), Ewan Baird (percussion), Robbie Greig (fiddle), Conal McDonagh (pipes, whistles) and Conor Markey (banjo, bouzouki, guitars) – shift the focus from the original material of their

last couple of releases to the importance of the tradition.

The tracks include the band's take on the traditional Irish folk song, *The Lurgy Stream*, and the reel, *The Wise Maid*, as well as *Western Island* by Scottish folk legend Archie Fisher – the song which also provides the record's title.

*I Must Go* was uncovered by McKenna in an old songbook as part of a commission for the opening concert at Celtic Connections in Glasgow two years ago. The show, entitled *Neath the Gloamini' Star*, aimed to celebrate how heritage is being carried forward into a new tradition. Paul updated the lyrics and added his own to bring it into its current form – a classic folk ballad which tells a tale of broken hearted lovers parting ways. It joins two previously released singles, *Solid Ground* and *One Last Cold Kiss*.

Paul McKenna has said the recording sees the band returning to its roots and celebrating the Scottish and Irish songs that are special to them.

"With *Setting Sun*," said Paul McKenna, "we've allowed ourselves to indulge in some of the songs and music we've always admired, melding this with our trademark sound and approach,

incorporating the folk, pop and Americana influences that our audiences have come to expect.

"We're really pleased with the collection of songs we've put together here and we hope it will give people a chance to reconnect with some classics and enjoy the angle from which we've approached them."

Formed in Glasgow in 2006, the Paul McKenna Band are known for their contemporary, dynamic signature compositions of Scottish and Irish folk music and passionate social conscience.

The band's expert playing is underpinned by Paul's emotive vocals, which have drawn frequent comparisons to the great Dick Gaughan.

As well as regular appearances at Celtic Connections, the band has been acclaimed for its performances at the Edmonton Folk Festival, the Winnipeg Folk Festival and the Woodford Folk Festival.

## Track Listing

1. One Last Cold Kiss
2. The Lurgy Stream
3. I Must Go
4. Solid Ground
5. Western Island
6. The Wise Maid







▲ The Wilderness Yet: Darren McMullen and Rachel Davis (Photo: Ryan MacDonald)

## OUT OF THE WILDERNESS

The Wilderness Yet have earned a reputation for their exquisite instrumental arrangements of Rowan Piggott and Philippe Barnes behind the polished vocals of Rosie Hodgson. So their new album of unaccompanied singing marks a significant departure.

The album, *Westlin Winds*, further defies expectations by giving each of the voices equal weight – with Hodgson just as likely to be offering harmonies as taking the lead.

This is perfectly illustrated in their stunning rendition of The Voice Squad's classic *The Cocks are Crowing* – in which Philippe Barnes' rich baritone provides a chestnut brown lead – with



a genuinely transformative impact on the song.

The band's repertoire draws on the song traditions of England and Scotland as well as Ireland. Apart from Burns' *Westlin Winds*, the album includes the seventeenth-century English ballad, *Chanticleer*, the Geordie mining song, *Byker Hill*, and the Copper Family's *Adieu, Sweet Lovely Nancy*, as well as a lilted version of the slip-jig, *Na Ceannabháin Bhána*, followed by the reel, *The Mountain Road*.

By highlighting their combined vocal prowess, this album has elevated the band to a new level – building on the existing widespread recognition for their remarkable talents as instrumentalists.

Taking their name from a Gerard Manley Hopkins classic, this Sheffield-based trio fuse the clear, charismatic vocals of former BBC Young Folk Award finalist, Rosie Hodgson, with the fine, sensitive fiddling of Rowan Piggott and the deft guitar and flute playing of Philippe Barnes.

Independently, they have earned audiences' esteem as consummate musicians;

together, they weave an eclectic tapestry of traditional and original songs and tunes; from a *cappella* three-part harmonies to luscious instrumental arrangements.

Their eponymous debut album was released in 2020 to critical acclaim, closely followed by a short EP of commissioned covers called *John O' Dreams*.

Lockdown saw them record a winter album called *Turn The Year Round*, featuring secular re-writes of classic carols along with seasonal favourites.

Another studio album, *What Holds The World Together*, was released in 2022 to further positive reaction from critics and audiences.

### Track Listing:

1. Westlin Winds
2. The Goose and the Common
3. Black-Eyed Susan
4. Na Ceannabháin Bhána and The Mountain Road
5. The Cocks Are Crowing
6. Byker Hill
7. Chanticleer
8. Mary and the Soldier
9. Adieu Sweet Lovely Nancy

## SIDE TRACKS



### TRIO ON ODYSSEY

The album, *Odyssey*, is the new release from the remarkable talents of Tara Breen, Pádraig Rynne and Jim Murray.

With ten tracks – including tunes from Ireland, Denmark and Asturias – as well as newly composed pieces from band members, the album is a musical journey by a trio of master musicians at the top of their game. Kudos, too, to Rynne and Murray for the album's excellent production values.

*Odyssey* is due for release this month (August).



### UNEARTHED

*Unearthed*, the debut album from Armagh uilleann piper Conor Mallon features a mix of traditional tunes and original compositions.

All-Ireland piping champion, Conor has won many other awards like NPU's Piping Scholarship in 2008 and was the first recipient of the Mark Donnelly Uilleann Piping Bursary in 2010.

Conor was also the first recipient of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland/BBC NI Young Traditional Musicians Platform award.



SIDE  
TRACKS

## SOME SHOWER!

A thundering four piece of box, flute, pipes and guitar, from Na Garbh Chriochan in the Scottish highlands, FRAS blend old melodies and original tunes to create a crashing wave of highland music – tearing up dancefloors in their wake and leaving audiences captivated and often quite breathless.

Their latest album, *Flinne*, showcases their original compositions – offering shelter from the elements whilst embracing their signature storming West Highland sound.



## SCOTS SHUFFLE

Church Street Shuffle is the contemporary Scottish Highland fiddle and guitar duo of Neil Ewart and Ali MacQuarrie. Beyond the standard reels and jigs, they employ modern production techniques to create a multi-faceted live sound that seems much bigger than their number. Bass pedals and looping and are used to create a fresh and up to date take on the classic highland folk duo.

*The Five Day Weekend* is their debut album, showcasing their innovative approach to traditional music.



## REBELS WITHOUT A PAUSE

The Ciderhouse Rebellion's collaboration with singer Molly Donnery of The Haar has resulted in the release of a new album, *A Little Bit Slanted*.

An album born on the road, out of friendship and late-night laughter, *A Little Bit Slanted* was recorded by the English duo of master accordionist, Murray Grainger, and fiddler, Adam Summerhayes, in just two days on the North Yorkshire Moors with Irish singer, Molly Donnery, who collaborates with the pair in their critically acclaimed project, The Haar, along with bodhrán player Cormac Byrne.

A mid-winter break during a tour spontaneously turned into a four-hour drive to lay down

nine songs, springing from a casual conversation between the three about touring in this configuration of violin, voice and accordion.

"Shall we do a little tour, then?" asked Adam. Molly responded "I was thinking of doing some songs I haven't done in a while, from when I was a kid?" "Cool," said Murray and the project was under way.

Their intention to capture some of the joy and magic they had been feeling during their live sets resulted in this collection of traditional songs, performed in entirely new ways.

Molly unearthed many songs from her childhood in both Irish and English - including some from her journey in Scór na nÓg - refreshed and renewed in the unique arrangements by Murray Grainger and Adam Summerhayes.

As Grainger says: "Molly is probably the finest singer I've ever worked with. She's

ridiculously good." Singing in English and Irish, she brings a wonderfully contemporary timbre to these traditional songs.

"She is such a capable and imaginative singer," adds Summerhayes. "In the same way as we react to her, she absolutely reacts to us. So if we've suddenly taken a song in a different direction, she will absolutely go with it without a pause. I don't know any other singer who's quite as flexible."

## Track Listing

1. Mo Buachaillín Donn
2. An Spealadóir
3. Jimmy Murphy
4. The Kilmachthomas Girl
5. The Cabin with the Roses 'round the Door
6. Where the Mulcair River Flows
7. Murphy's Running Dog
8. A Stór Mo Chroí/The Treasure of My Heart
9. My Father's Cabin Small
10. The Town of Ballybay







▲ Sound of Sligo: (from left) Samantha Harvey, Daithí Gormley and Oisín Mac Diarmada

# STEEPED IN THE SLIGO TRADITION

## THREE TAKE THE LANE TO THE GLEN

The trio of Oisín Mac Diarmada, Daithí Gormley and Samantha Harvey know a thing or two about the musical heritage of Sligo and the neighbouring counties.

In their new album, *Lane to the Glen*, that intimate knowledge is combined with genuinely masterful playing to deliver a remarkable collection of tunes driven by the interplay between Gormley's button accordion and Mac Diarmada's fiddle with fine support from Harvey on piano.

Mac Diarmada and Harvey are perhaps best known as members of the band Téada – which has an extensive back catalogue of albums and hundreds of concerts behind its name.



Both Mac Diarmada and Gormley are senior All-Ireland champions and collaborated previously on the *Fiddlers of Sligo Tunebook* in 2017 before Daithí released his debut solo album, *Fiddling without a Bow*, in 2018.

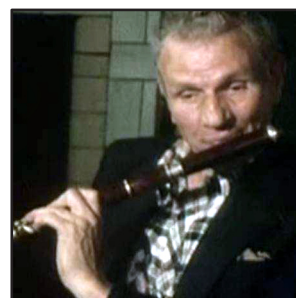
The new album opens with *The Melvin Wave*, a reel by the late Charlie Lennon from Leitrim followed by the title track, *The Lane to the Glen*, by Ed Reavy from Knappagh in Co. Cavan via Philadelphia. Another Reavy reel, *Aughamore*, also leads off the closing set of reels – which ends with *Tom Maguire's Fancy* written by John Brady and previously recorded by Mac Diarmada with Brian Fitzgerald and Michael Rooney.

The album also includes a set of three reels written by Josie McDermott (pictured right) from the Sligo-Roscommon

border and two tunes associated with the great Sligo-born fiddle player, Lad O'Beirne.

One of the earliest recordings of the barndance, *The Gráinne Mhaol*, was made by another revered member of Sligo's American musical diaspora, James Morrison.

Mayo is also represented by the reel, *St. James' Kitchen*, by the widely acclaimed fiddle and flute player, Brendan Tonra, while Joe Liddy from Leitrim contributes *The Sweat House*.



### Track Listing

1. The Melvin Wave/The Lane to the Glen (Reels)
2. Galloping O'Hogan/The Magpie in the Tree (Jigs)
3. St. James' Kitchen/Lord Gordon (Reels)
4. The Lansdowne Lass/The Mill of Kylemore/Peg McGrath's (Reels)
5. O'Kelly's Fancy/The Fiddlers' Contest (Hornpipes)
6. The Dogs among the Bushes/Paddy Gavin's (Reels)
7. A Chara/Séamus Thompson's No. 1 (Reels)
8. Paddy Kelly's/Tommy Maguire's No. 3 (Jigs)
9. The Winemaker/Lad O'Beirne's (Reels)
10. Crotty's Glory/Reel No. 295 (Reels)
11. The Sailor's Farewell/The Sweat House/The Steampacket (Reels)
12. The Gráinne Mhaol/Malloy's Favourite (Barndance/Reel)
13. Aughamore/The Bog of Allen/Tom Maguire's Fancy (Reels)





▲ Laura-Beth Salter (left) and Ali Hutton

## SOUNDED AND GROUNDED

**F**rom the Ground is the exceptional new self-titled album from two musical forces of the Scottish folk and roots music scene.

Laura-Beth Salter (Kinnaris Quintet) and Ali Hutton have come together to create a Scottish soundscaping masterpiece with a powerful message at its core.

Cinematic, contemporary and captivating, *From the Ground* is an ode to nature and its infinite power to benefit both our mental and physical health.

Samples of whistling winds from Skye, crashing waves from Harris beaches, forest sounds from the outskirts of Glasgow and the crackling fire from Ali's own home are layered with

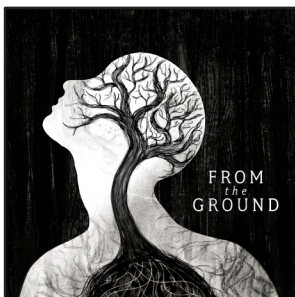
bold organic instrumentation and poignant lyricism to create a stunning self-composed piece of work which is intricate and epic in equal measure.

The album has been years in the making, as Laura-Beth and Ali painstakingly worked through the composition and arrangement of the tunes in a way which is markedly different to their usual individual creative approaches and typically acoustic sounds.

The pair are joined by Patsy Reid on fiddles and Paul Jennings on drums, while Duncan Lyall contributes bass (string and electric), moog and some additional programming.

### Track Listing:

1. The 11th Hour
2. From the Ground
3. Boreal (Paper Boats/Taiga)
4. Broken Shores (To Catch the Coming Rain/Lifeblood/Broken Shores)
5. Wake Lines
6. Aquila
7. Brave One
8. The Beautiful Cold
9. Breathe



▲ LÉDA: Éadaoin Ní Mhaicín (left) and Amy Laurenson.

## FROM MAYO TO THE SHETLANDS

**W**eaving together sound palettes drawn from their respective homeplaces in Mayo and Shetland Isles, Éadaoin Ní Mhaicín and Amy Laurenson have been together as LÉDA for just over a year.

Their debut five-track album, *Oh Honey*, has just been released and is available on Bandcamp and Spotify.

Éadaoin is a multi-award winning multi-instrumentalist with a breath-taking number of world titles to her name on a number of instruments. After releasing her first singles she managed to achieve two world music number ones on the iTunes Charts in Ireland.

Rooted in the traditional music of Shetland, Amy explores the music of her homeland alongside traditional and folk music from Scotland, Ireland and Scandinavia.

Amy was named BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year in 2023 and also lectures in traditional music and piano at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's Junior Conservatoire.

Between them, the two have travelled the world playing music in major venues like Aviva Stadium, Croke Park, RDS and the National Concert Hall in Dublin as well as The Barbican in London and stages in the US, Canada, China and Finland.

The duo is now based in Glasgow.

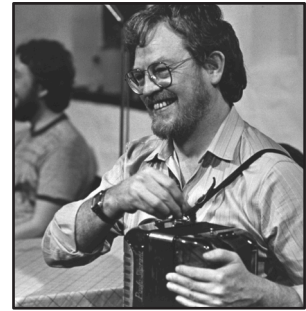
### Track Listing:

1. Primrose
2. Oh Honey
3. Loch Doré
4. Snowblind
5. Close Distance





▼ The Tulla Céili Band c.1955 (Photo: Michael John Glynne).



▲ Tony MacMahon  
(Photo:RTÉ)



▲ Nan Tom Taimín de Búrca  
(Photo:RTÉ)

# LEGACY OF THE MASTERS

## PÁDRAIC UNEARTHS GEMS IN THE ARCHIVE

**T**he Irish Traditional Music Archive has just released a remarkable album of vintage recordings under the title, *The Old Reels of the World*.

The twenty-one tracks on the album – which include some previously unpublished recordings – range from the 1950s to the late 1990s and feature some of the leading figures in traditional music, including Séamus Ennis, Willie Clancy, Bobby Casey, Joe Heaney, Leo Rowsome, Kathleen Harrington, Tommie Potts, Seán Keane and more.

The tracks were compiled by Dr Pádraic Mac Mathúna from



the donated private collections of Tom Davis, Tony MacMahon and Larry Redican.

Pádraic Mac Mathúna is an uilleann piper, who over the past three years has catalogued a huge body of old recordings for ITMA *pro bono*.

His father, Ciarán Mac Mathúna, worked as a radio and TV presenter for RTÉ, and for decades collected Irish traditional music throughout Ireland and during trips to the United States.

Ciarán also sent private personalised recordings to

musicians in the States – some of which have been catalogued by Pádraic during his time with ITMA.

Pádraic's mother, Dolly McMahon, is a renowned singer who played a central role in the traditional music and ballad revival in the 1960s.

### Track Listing

1. Connemara Stockings/Westmeath Hunt/Tear the Calico (*Tulla Céili Band*, 1960)
2. The New Mown Meadow/Colonel Frazier's (*Seán Keane*, 1973)
3. Apples in Winter/The Carraroe (*Tony McMahon & Séamus Connolly*, 1999)
4. And You Lied Next to the Wall (*Joe Heaney*, 1980)
5. The Wind That Shakes the Barley (*Séamus Tansey*, 1980s)
6. College Groves/The Cherry Tree (*Seán Keane & Bridie Lafferty*, 1961)
7. Cregg's Pipes (*Willie Clancy*, early 1960s)
8. An Cailín Fearúil Fionn (*Nan Tom Taimín de Búrca*, 1988)
9. The Mountain Top/The Rose in the Garden (*Charlie Lennon, Mark Kelly, Mick O'Connor & Séamus Mac Mathúna*, 1980)
10. Lucy Campbell's (*John & James Kelly*, 1973)
11. Sporting Nell/The Ragged Hank of Yarn (*Bobby Casey*, 1970s)
12. The Skylark/Roaring Mary (*Joe Leary, Joe Cooley & Mongan Murray*, 1956)
13. An Raibh Tú ag an gCarraig/The Bunch of Keys (*Tommie Potts*, 1957)
14. Green Groves of Erin/The Bag of Spuds/Swallow's Tail (*Larry Redican, Joe Burke, Jack Coen & Felix Dolan*, early 1960s)
15. The Flax in Bloom (*Seán Maguire*, 1950s)
16. The Galtee Rangers/Farewell to Ireland (*Antóin Mac Gabhann & Paddy Ryan*, 1978)
17. The Bucks of Oranmore (*Leo Rowsome*, 1950s)
18. The Bag of Spuds (*Kathleen Harrington & Elizabeth Crotty*, 1957)
19. The Bunch of Green Rushes/Gerdie Commame's (*Paddy Canny & Eileen O'Brien*, 1995)
20. Garret Barry's (*Tommie Potts & Séamus Ennis*, 1978)
21. Humours of Ballyconnell/Sailor on the Rock/Lucky in Love (*Castle Céili Band*, 1961)



▲ Talking tunes: Larry Redican (left) and Ciarán Mac Mathúna



# Ace & Deuce of Piping

concert  
2024

Seán Gavin	Uilleann Pipes
Mairead Hurley	Concertina
Deirdre Hurley	Flute
Connie O'Connell	Fiddle
Áine O'Connor	Fiddle
Francis O'Connor	Flute
Emer Mayock	Uilleann Pipes
Rosie Stewart	Songs
Pádraic Keane	Uilleann Pipes
Fergus McGorman	Flute
Aidan Connolly	Fiddle
Ruairi McGorman	Bouzouki
Doireann Ní Ghlacáin	MC

8pm  
SATURDAY  
**21st**  
SEPTEMBER  
LIBERTY HALL  
THEATRE  
DUBLIN



Networking  
Nollaig  
Casey

Page 64



José Manuel  
Tejedor heads  
for Bantry

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## concert pitch

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# DOBRO MASTER JERRY ON TOUR

**D**obro master and 16-time Grammy winner, Jerry Douglas, is to the resonator guitar what Jimi Hendrix was to the electric guitar – elevating, transforming and reinventing the instrument in countless ways.

But Douglas is also a free-wheeling, forward-thinking recording and touring artist whose output incorporates elements of country, bluegrass, rock, jazz, blues, and Celtic into his distinctive musical vision.

Called “Dobro’s matchless contemporary master” by *The New York Times*, Douglas has



▲ Jerry Douglas

also been voted Country Music Association Musician of the Year three times.

One of the most innovative recording artists in music as a solo artist, he is band leader for the Jerry Douglas Band and his Grammy winning bluegrass band, the Earls of Leicester, as well as a member of ground-

breaking ensembles like Alison Krauss and Union Station, Boone Creek, and Strength In Numbers.

His distinctive sound graces more than 1500 albums with artists such as Paul Simon, James Taylor, Emmylou Harris, Earl Scruggs, Elvis Costello, George Jones and Ray Charles – not forgetting Daoiri Farrell’s recent release, *The Wedding Above in Glencree*.

Jerry has also produced albums for Maura O’Connell, Alison Krauss, The Whites, Steep Canyon Rangers, John Hiatt and Molly Tuttle.

He has also served as co-music director of the acclaimed BBC Scotland TV series, *The Transatlantic Sessions*, which has provided an important platform for many Irish and Scots traditional musicians.

In 2004, Jerry Douglas was recognised by the US National Endowment for the Arts with an American Heritage Fellowship.

As part of a wider European tour, Jerry is set to play three Irish dates – at the Skibbereen Arts Festival on July 30; at the Pavilion Theatre in Dún Laoghaire on July 31; and at glór in Ennis on August 1.

PAT EGAN PRESENTS

## DOCKERS

SONGS AND STORIES OF DUBLIN DOCKS

BY GARY BROWN

FEATURING NEW SONGS BY  
DAMIEN DEMPSEY  
GARY BROWN & GEORGE MURPHY

STARRING GEORGE MURPHY

FRI 13 SEPTEMBER  
LIBERTY HALL THEATRE

Tickets from €33.50 (additional fees may apply at ticketmaster.ie)



▲ Jerry Douglas (left) and Ali Bain, joint musical directors of *The Transatlantic Sessions*.



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concert pitch:  
the gathering



the  
**GATHERING**  
Sunday August 11th  
at Sandino's, Derry

A gathering of some of the finest contemporary folk and trad musicians in Ireland.

John Francis Flynn  
Rónán Ó Snodaigh & Myles O'Reilly  
Lemoncello  
Mohammad Syfkhan  
Teknopeasant  
Tessio  
RUA  
+ many more

5pm - late  
Advance tickets: £20 at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)



RTÉ Concert Orchestra

**Éire is Alba**  
RTÉ Concert Orchestra

David Brophy conductor Zoë Conway violin John Mc Intyre guitar  
Julie Fowles vocals Éamon Doorley bouzouki, fiddle, vocals

Tickets €15 - €42.50 • See [rte.ie/co](https://www.rte.ie/co)  
No service charges apply

Friday 9 August, 7.30pm National Concert Hall



▼ Derry-bound: John Francis Flynn

**concert pitch:**  
the gathering

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## GATHERING IN DERRY

Derry's arts, culture and sports festival, Féile Derry 2024, will include some of the leading figures in new Irish folk and traditional music.

On Sunday August 11, the Gathering at Sandinos Cafe Bar – the venue founded by the late Joe Mulheron – will run from 5pm to 12am.

RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Award winner, John Francis Flynn, will be joined by Rónán Ó Snodaigh and Myles O'Reilly, Mohammad Syfkhan and Lemoncello along with some of Derry's finest talent including Tessio,

Teknopeasant and RUÁ. Tickets may be booked at [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com).

Féile 2024 will also feature A Night of Music from Iraq and Ireland at the Museum of Free Derry on August 8.

Drawing on the rich traditions of Ireland and Iraq with the harp and the qanun at the centre – along with an array of traditional instruments – the concert will mark the beginning of a year-long collaboration for a newly formed acoustic ensemble.

The line-up features Niwar Issa, Saman Kareem, Helin Star Qadir, Husain Al-harbi, Lucia McGinnis and Martin Coyle.



▲ Alyth McCormack

## NPU HOSTS MUSIC AND SONGS

**N**a Píobairí Uilleann continues with its regular *Session with the Pipers* concert series in the Cobblestone in Smithfield, Dublin on the first Tuesday of the month.

The performances run from 9.30pm to 11pm. Seating is available on a first come first served basis. Admission is €15 (concession: €10).

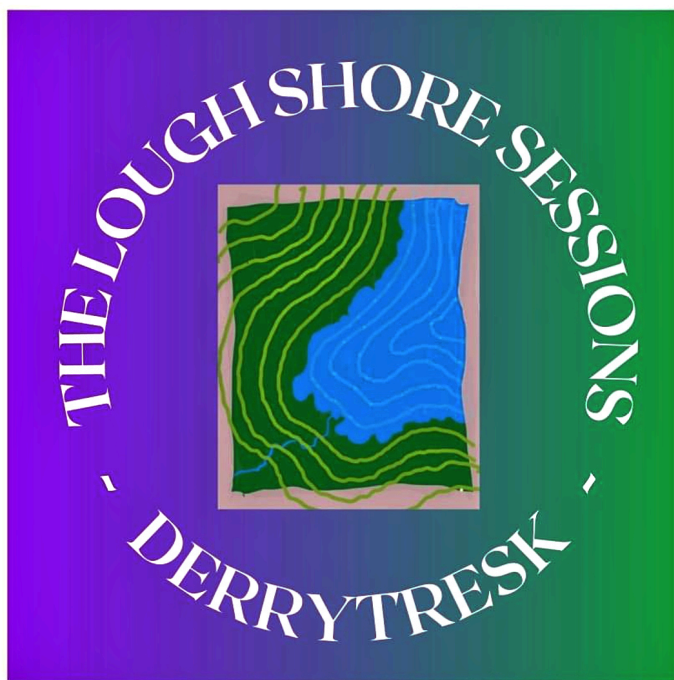
Artists confirmed for August 6 include Liam Winnett (uilleann pipes), Emma Lewis (fiddle), Cameron Hibbs (fiddle) and Alyth McCormack (song).

On August 15, in the NPU's series of illustrated talks on traditional music, song and dance, *Notes and Narratives*, Derek Mulcahy will reflect on the musical life of P. J. McNamara (1869-1927), the Limerick-born New York band leader.

Admission is €10 (concession €5). For those unable to attend in person, it will also be live streamed for free through NPU-TV on the NPU website: [www.pipers.ie](http://www.pipers.ie).



SAVE THE DATE.....



.....1st-3rd NOVEMBER 2024





▲ Martin Hayes



▲ Sorcha Costello



▲ The Weaving ▼ Breaking Trad



▲ Fiddle Case

## FROM HERE TO CLARE

### FEAKLE FESTIVAL OVERFLOWING WITH FANTASTIC PERFORMERS

This year's edition of the Feakle Festival will bring an exceptional line-up of musicians to East Clare from Wednesday, August 7, to Monday, August 12, led by local favourite, Martin Hayes.

The festival will open with the internationally acclaimed fiddle master playing a set in the Community Centre on Wednesday evening, accompanied by some of his musical companions.

The Thursday night concert in Pepper's Marquee features three trios: Danny O'Mahony, Johnny 'Ringo' McDonagh and Cyril O'Donoghue; Sorcha Costello, Conor Connolly and Pádraig Ó Dubhghaill; and Eileen O'Brien, Jackie Daly and Paul De Grae; along with the renowned O'Loughlin family from Corofin.

At the Friday lunchtime concert Martin Hayes will be joined by Brian Donnellan, Sorcha Costello, Mary McNamara, Geraldine McNamara, Gearóid McNamara, Danny O'Mahony, Suzanne Leahy, Páraic Mac Donnchadha and Terence O'Reilly.

The line-up for the Friday night concert includes Martin Hayes, Brian Donnellan and Cormac McCarthy; and The Weaving (Méabh Begley, Cáit Ní Rian and Owen Spafford).

The festival gala concert in St. Mary's Church on Saturday night will feature the exciting

new quartet of Keane/Connolly/McGorman who released their new album last December. Also on the bill are the concertina collaboration of Cormac Begley and Jack Talty and the Breaking Trad trio of Donal Murphy, David Doocey and Mike Galvin.

Saturday evening will also see a marquee gig by Pólca 4 and a céilí in the Community Hall with the Star of Munster.

Sunday afternoon features a public interview with Cormac Begley, a free outdoor concert with The Fiddle Case on the Fair Green. On Sunday evening, the Grand Finale Céilí in the marquee will be led by the Tulla Céilí Band.

The festival also includes two singing sessions on Saturday and Sunday afternoon as well as three mornings of instrumental workshops, CD and book promotions, a pop-up Gaeltacht and a festival walk.

The festival will wind down on Monday August 12 with a number of free events including informal sessions, a lunchtime concert and an evening céilí.

Tickets for all of the events are available from [www.feakle-festival.ie](http://www.feakle-festival.ie).





▲ Lisa O'Neill

# LISA TAKES ON THE ORCHESTRA

## TRADITION NOW RETURNS TO NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

Singer-songwriter, Lisa O'Neill, and Scottish composer, Erland Cooper, will headline the National Concert Hall's *Tradition Now* Multi-Room Festival in November.

Shining a light on the continuing evolution of traditional music, while paying homage to its roots, Tradition Now, the multi-room festival at the the National Concert Hall (NCH) returns on November 16 and 17, featuring performances from innovative artists.

The Festival sees main stage performances by award-winning singer-songwriter Lisa O'Neill making her orchestral debut with the National Symphony Orchestra to perform orchestrations by Terry Edwards – commissioned by the NCH – as well as work from her latest album, *All of This Is Chance*.

The main stage will also host acclaimed Scottish composer, producer and multi-instrumentalist, Erland Cooper, in a highly-anticipated performance which will combine field recordings with traditional orchestration and contemporary electronic elements.

Elsewhere in the NCH there will also be performances by musical alchemists, This is How We Fly (Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh, Seán Mac Erlaine, Nic Gareiss and Petter Berndalen) a group that fuse traditional

Irish music, Swedish folk, jazz, and percussive dance to sublime effect; as well as folk/traditional/ambient duo Rónán Ó Snodaigh and Myles O'Reilly, and Swedish-Norwegian trio, Ævestaden, who blend lyres, fiddle, kantele, vocals, mouth harp, electronics and more to create unique soundscapes

Also taking part are uilleann piper, Leonard Barry, supported by Andy Morrow and Seamie O'Dowd; eclectic duo Nick Hart and Tom Moore who augment viol and tenor viol with an array of drones and basses; and electro-folk artist, Frankie Archer, known for her innovative blend of manipulated samples, synths, drum tracks and earthy Northumbrian fiddle.

The John Field Room will also play host to the John Field Room Sessions over the two nights. Since its inception, Tradition Now has grown in breadth and popularity, mirroring the development of the genre, as it continues to evolve and renew. Tradition Now reflects this, while also honouring its heritage.

For more information – including event bookings – see <https://www.nch.ie/>



▲ Erland Cooper



▲ This Is How We Fly



▲ Ronan Ó Snodaigh &amp; Myles O'Reilly ▼ Frankie Archer





# THREE FOR THE ROAD

## MUSIC NETWORK'S AUTUMN TOUR



▲ Touring together: (from left) Mike McGoldrick, Niall McCabe and Nollaig Casey (Photo: Music

A new collaboration under the auspices of Music Network will see acclaimed fiddle and viola player, Nollaig Casey, joined by award-winning multi-instrumentalist, Mike McGoldrick, and singer/guitarist, Niall McCabe, undertake a ten-concert tour of Ireland.

As well as music and songs from an extensive repertoire, this newly curated line-up will also present world premieres of two new works commissioned by Music Network: a song by McCabe and an instrumental piece by Casey and McGoldrick.

One of Ireland's most gifted and versatile musicians, Nollaig Casey is known for her distinctive sound and instantly recognisable playing style. She has worked with a host of renowned artists including Mary Black, Christy Moore, Liam O'Flynn, Paddy Keenan, Sharon Shannon, Carlos Nuñez, Enya, Sinéad O'Connor and Dick Gaughan as well as in a duo with her late husband, the guitarist Arty McGlynn, and in a trio with her sisters, Máire and Mairéad.

As for larger ensembles, Nollaig has been a member of the RTÉ Symphony Orchestra, Planxty, Coolfin and, most recently, Cherish the Ladies.

Niall McCabe, with his self-effacing humor and captivating stories of growing up on a remote Irish island, brings an effortless charm to his performances.

An accomplished finger style guitar player, Niall has lent his unique voice to trad fusion band, Beoga, touring Ireland, Europe and the USA while also playing support for Ed Sheeran and others. More recently he has opened for Mary Black at the Olympia. Niall's latest U.S. tour saw him perform at the City Winery New York and several showcase gigs for the week of Americanafest in Nashville.

His recent album, *Rituals*, was released in February 2023 to critical acclaim while the title song, *Rituals*, topped the RTÉ radio airplay charts for five consecutive weeks.



▲ Nollaig Casey

Former BBC Folk Awards Musician of the Year Mike McGoldrick is a gifted multi-instrumentalist and composer. Born in Manchester to Irish parents, he is a master of the wooden flute, low whistles and uilleann pipes.

A co-founder of Flook and Lúnasa, and a linchpin of Capercaillie's line-up since 1998, Mike has collaborated with Mark Knopfler since 2009 and has been a core member of *The Transatlantic Sessions* since 2007.

Steeped in Irish traditional music, he has, from his groundbreaking 2000 solo album, *Fused*, onwards, assimilated a wide range of musical styles into his work including African and Indian rhythms.

In 2005 Mike released *Wired*, which was even more captivating,



▲ Niall McCabe

### DATES AND VENUES

September 24, 8pm:  
Pavilion Theatre, Dún Laoghaire

September 25, 7:30pm:  
The Sugar Club, Dublin 2

September 27, 4pm:  
Clifden Town Hall, Clifden

September 28, 8pm: King House, Boyle

September 29, 7:30pm:  
glór, Ennis

October 2, 8pm: The Court-house Arts Centre, Tinahely

October 3, 8pm: Siamsa Tíre, Tralee

October 4, 7:30pm: World Heart Beat Academy, London

October 5, 8pm: Triskel Arts Centre, Cork

October 6, 8pm: St. Michael's Church, Waterville

incorporating alternative sounds to create a brilliant fusion at the cutting edge of folk music.

In 2018 he released *ARC*, his fifth solo album, *The Wishing Tree* with John Doyle and John McCusker, and *Dog in the Fog* with Dezi Donnelly – all of which received very positive reviews.

Once again Music Network has created an intriguing line-up of musicians with enormous potential to deliver not only exciting new original compositions but also sparkling arrangements of pieces from the traditional canon.



▲ Mike McGoldrick



▼ **Blath na hÓige:** (front from left) Síle Denvir, Méabh Ní Bheaglaioich, Étáin Ní Churraoin, Megan Nic Ruairí, Séamus Ó Flaharta, Colm Mac an Iomaire, (back from left) Piaras Ó Liorcáin, Máire Ní Churraoin, Caoimhe Ní Fhlaharta and Cathal Ó Curráin.

**concert pitch:**  
frank harte festival

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## CELEBRATING FRANK HARTE'S LEGACY

**T**he nineteenth edition of the annual Frank Harte Festival weekend will get under way at the Teachers' Club in Dublin from Friday September 27.

This year's special guests include Bláth na hÓige – the award-winning collective of young performers made up of Méabh Ní Bheaglaioich, Caoimhe and Séamus Uí Fhlatharta, Cathal Ó Curráin, Megan Nic Ruairí, Piaras Ó Liorcáin and Máire and Étáin Ní Churraoin, under the musical direction of Síle Denvir and Colm Mac an Iomaire.

Originally from Kyiv in Ukraine, Yuliia Bakalova and Daria Mazina are both now based in Carrick-on-Shannon. Both are passionate about Ukraine's traditional folk culture. Daria is a talented singer while Yuliia is a poet and songwriter as well as a singer.

Seán Mone from Keady in Co. Armagh is best known as a singer of self composed songs – mostly humorous and political like *The Transit Van*, *David Trimble and the Loyal Orange Heroes of Comber*, *Willie McCrea, Last Election Day*, and *Articles Two and Three* – but also some serious like the moving *Rosaleta* and *Jack Campbell*. But Seán is

probably best known for *Lovers and Friends* – regularly sung in singing circles around Ireland and not least at the Frank Harte Festival where it is sung as the final song of the weekend.

All-Ireland champion piper, Sorchá Ní Scoláí, is also an acclaimed sean-nós singer. From the age of 10, Sorchá has attracted significant attention nationally and internationally for her piping. However, she is equally accomplished as a singer –

following underage success at Feis Ceoil singing competitions with a first at An tOireachtas taking the Corn Sheosamh Uí Éanaigh agus Bonn Óir in 2022.

Cormac Ó hAodha, comes from a family of singers in Baile Bhuirne in Co. Cork. His mother's first cousin was the late and much lamented Diarmuid Ó Súilleabháin – one of the finest traditional singers of his generation who is commemorated in the annual traditional

singing and music festival, Éigse Dhiarmuid Uí Shúilleabháin, in Cúil Aodha.

Cormac is not only a very fine performer of songs from the extensive Muscraí repertoire – but he is also a very serious researcher – working for a PhD on the Múscraí song tradition at University College Cork.

Originally based in Portland, Oregon, singer, Michael Steen, became a welcome presence at online singing sessions during the pandemic – before moving to Ireland. Since then, he has been a regular performer at An Góilín and at the Inishowen Traditional Singers' Circle as well as other singing sessions around the country.

The annual celebration of the musical legacy of Frank Harte has been organised by An Góilín Traditional Singers since 2006, following the death of Frank Harte, a close associate and friend, the previous year.

Since its inception the festival has been a focus for traditional singing and music by performers from these shores and beyond – some attending as special guests but many more participating in the open singing sessions, workshops and walking tours – who generate the unique atmosphere of the festival.

### FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

#### FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 27

8pm: **Official Opening** followed by **Open Singing Session**. €5

#### SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 28

11am: **Song Workshop** featuring Cathal Ó Curráin and Máire and Étáin Ní Churraoin €10

1.30-2.30pm: **Illustrated Talk, 19th Century Dublin's Lost Street Poets and Tenement Ballads**, by Catherine Anne Cullen. Free

3pm-5pm: **Open Singing Session** €5

8pm: **The Grand Concert** with Bláth na hÓige, Yuliia Bakalova and Daria Mazina, Seán Mone, Sorchá Ní Scoláí, Cormac Ó hAodha and Michael Steen €25

#### SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 29

11am: **Traditional Singing and Walking Tour of Dublin's Phoenix Park** hosted by An Góilín Singers. Tour programme, map and song booklet included with the weekend ticket or available for purchase for €5 on the day.

3pm-5.30pm: **Open Singing Session and Final Farewell** €5



# MASTER MUSICIANS HEAD FOR BANTRY

The annual Masters of Tradition Festival – curated by Martin Hayes – returns to Bantry from August 21 to 25. Among the performers heading to West Cork for the event are Iarla Ó Lionáird, Cormac McCarthy, Bill Whelan, Zoë Conway, John McIntyre, José Manuel Tejedor, Brighde Chaimbeul, Brian Donnellan and the quartet of Keane Connolly McGorman.

The festival includes seven headline concerts (including two late night gigs), four talks and three secret concerts – which will take place in various locations in the Bantry area with the performers only revealed at the event.

## HEADLINE CONCERTS

**Wednesday 8pm @ Maritime Hotel**  
Martin Hayes (*fiddle*)  
Brian Donnellan (*concertina*, *bouzouki*)  
Mick McAuley (*accordion*, *concertina*, *guitar*)  
Suzanne Leahy (*dance*)

**Thursday 7.30pm @ Bantry House**  
Nick Hart (*tenor viol*) and Tom Moore (*viola*)  
Zoë Conway (*fiddle*) and John McIntyre (*guitar*)

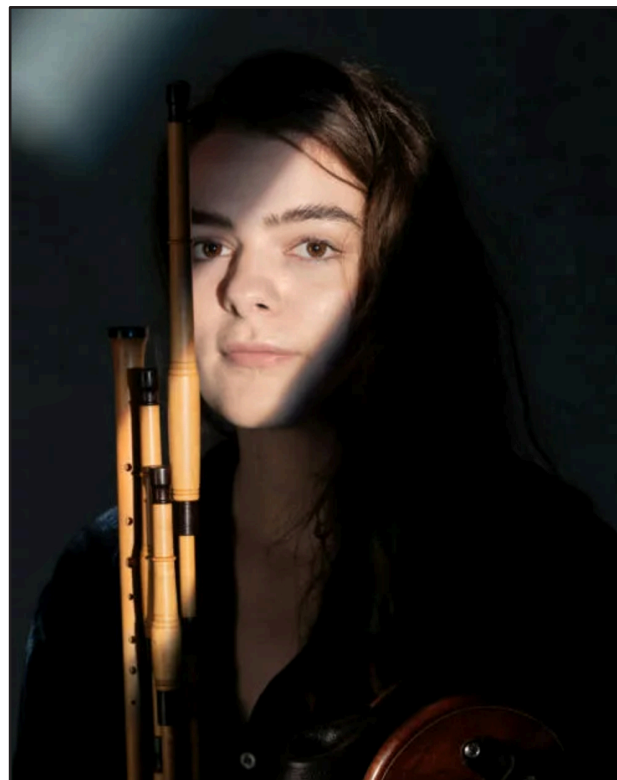
Nick Hart has been described as one of the finest interpreters of English folk song of his generation while Zoë Conway and John McIntyre have been acclaimed as one of the best folk duos on the planet.



Nick Hart

**Friday 7.30pm @ Bantry House**  
Toner Quinn (*fiddle*)  
Caoimhe and Séamus Uí Fhlatharta (*sean-nós songs*)  
Danny O'Mahony (*accordion*) and Micheál Ó Raghallaigh (*concertina*)

**Friday 10.30pm @ Bantry House**  
Brighde Chaimbeul (*Scottish smallpipes*)  
Pádraic Keane (*uilleann pipes*)  
José Manuel Tejedor (*Asturian pipes*)



**Saturday 7.30pm @ Bantry House**  
Iarla Ó Lionáird (*sean-nós songs*)  
Cormac McCarthy (*piano*)  
Matthew Berrill (*clarinet*)  
Pádraic Keane (*uilleann pipes*)  
Aidan Connolly (*fiddle*)  
Fergus McGorman (*flute*)  
Ruairí McGorman (*bouzouki*, *fiddle*)

**Saturday 10.30pm @ Bantry House**  
Geraldine Cotter (*piano*) and the Ré Órga Ensemble  
Piano player and composer,

Geraldine Cotter, and friends present her critically acclaimed musical exploration, *Ré Órga* (Golden Age) on Raelach Records.

As well as traditional sets, this concert will feature new compositions, arrangements of rare archival material and new interpretations of well-known dance tunes.

**Sunday 7.30pm @ Bantry House**  
Martin Hayes and Friends



Geraldine Cotter (Photo: Maurice Gunning)



▼ José Manuel Tejedor

**concert pitch:**  
masters of tradition

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**TALKS**

The Cainteanna Series includes discussions and chats exploring music, creativity, tradition, philosophy and history with an occasional tune or two for good measure.

**Thursday 3.30pm @ Marino Church**  
Martin Hayes in conversation with Bill Whelan who chats about his life, career and impact on Irish music and dance.

**Friday 3.30 @ Marino Church**  
Martin Hayes in conversation with Toner Quinn, musician, writer and publisher who will talk about his book, *What Ireland Can Teach The World About Music and Other Essays*.

**Saturday 3.30pm @ Marino Church**  
Martin Hayes in conversation with artist, Tim Goulding



Peadar Ó Riada

Over five decades, Beara-based artist, Tim Goulding has had many solo and group exhibitions. A member of Aosdána, his work is held in national and international collections. *Music*, an exhibition of Tim's paintings will run throughout the festival.

**Sunday 3.30 @ Marino Church**  
Martin Hayes in conversation with Peadar Ó Riada, composer, musician and broadcaster. Peadar will talk about his book *Ceoltóirí Chualann – the Band that changed the Course of Irish Music*.

**SECRET CONCERTS**

These lunchtime concerts will take place in unusual venues in the Bantry area. If you want to find out who is performing, you'll just have to come along!

**Friday 12.30pm at St. Brendan's Church, Bantry**

**Saturday 12.30pm at Future Forests, Kealkil**

**Sunday 12.30pm at Whiddy Island**  
The ferry leaves Bantry Pier at 12 noon sharp. There is also a ferry at 11am. Ferry ticket required.

For more information, including booking, see <https://www.westcorkmusic.ie/masters-of-tradition/programme/>



▲ Seán Corcoran

**SEÁN CORCORAN  
SERIES 2024**

**This year's Seán Corcoran Series – which takes place in Drogheda from September 6 to 8 – will include a number of traditional music elements – reflecting Séan's storied career in music.**

Now in its second year, the festival – organised by Séan's daughter, Rosa – celebrates the Drogheda native who died in 2021.

Among the performers taking part over the course of the weekend are RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Award winner Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin; Gramdam Ceoil winner Len Graham; emerging traditional singer, Niamh Bury; fiddler Doireann Ní Ghlacáin; and bouzouki player Libby McCrohan. They will be joined by classical musicians Michael Holohan and Cora Venus Lunny; poet Theo Dorgan and many more.

The festival will mark the Irish debut of Palestinian cellist, Naseem Alatrash, a member of the Four Corners Quartet, which

combines Middle Eastern, jazz, classical and folk styles.

After the festival, Alatrash will visit the Tyrone Guthrie Centre in Annaghmakerrig to undertake a new collaborative composition with cellist, piper and composer, Neil Martin, for the Seán Corcoran Series.

The event will also feature a screening of *Tom Munnelly: Fear na n-Amhrán*, Sorcha Glackin's film on Corcoran's fellow song collector, Tom Munnelly, and a tribute to flute player and singer, Cathal McConnell, by an all-star flute ensemble comprising Harry Bradley, Aoife Granville, Rev. Gary Hastings, Sabhbh Ní Mhaolagáin, Fíona Ní Mhearáin and Fintan Vallely.

Along with a new work from composer and festival artist-in-residence, Natalia Beylis, the weekend will also include a number of talks and workshops covering a diverse range of topics.

For details of the events, visit <https://seancorcoranseries.com>



▲ Naseem Alatrash



# PATRICK O'KEEFFE

TRADITIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL CASTLEISLAND, CO. KERRY



THURS 24<sup>TH</sup> TO MON 28<sup>TH</sup>  
OF OCT. 2024 BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND



FRI - SEÁN KEANE

SAT - SLIABH LUACHRA CONCERT

SUN - KANE SISTERS, LIAM O'CONNOR & SEÁN MCKEON, DEREK HICKEY,  
LIAM FLANAGAN & CAOIMHIN O'FEARGHAILL, DANNY O'MAHONY &  
O'RAGHALLAIGH'S, TARA BREEN & ÓRLAITH MCAULIFFE

FESTIVAL CLUB  
WITH DAMIEN MULLANE, SEÁN  
O'MEARA & COLM BRODERICK

CLASSES ON ALL INSTRUMENTS  
SINGING CONCERT  
SLIABH LUACHRA FIDDLE RECITAL

MULTIPLE ALBUM LAUNCHES  
POP UP GAELTACHT  
CÉILITHE

## 'IRELAND'S BIGGEST AND BEST SESSION TRAIL'

CAOIMHIN Ó'RAGHALLAIGH • MICK O'BRIEN • DEREK HICKEY • OISIN MAC DIARMADA  
DAITHÍ GORMLEY • JACKIE DALY • MATT CRANITCH • LIAM O'CONNOR • LIZ KANE  
YVONNE KANE • MÁIREAD NÍ MHAOINIGH • CLARE FRIEL • SHEILA FRIEL  
ANNA FRIEL • TARA BREEN • ÓRLAITH MCAULIFFE • AIDAN CONNOLLY  
DEREK HICKEY • COLM GANNON • LIAM O'BRIEN • CAOIMHÍN Ó'FEARGHAILL  
PAUDIE O'CONNOR • AOIFE NÍ CHAOIMH • PADRAIC KEANE • ANDREA PALANDRI  
DONAL MURPHY • DANNY O'MAHONY • MACDARA Ó'RAGHALLAIGH  
MICHEÁL Ó'RAGHALLAIGH • TOM MORROW • DAMIEN MULLANE • SEÁN MCKEON

CAOIMHE FLANNERY • ÉIMEAR FLANNERY • EILEEN O'BRIEN • THERESE MCINERNEY • SHARON HOWLEY  
MARIAN CURTIN • EIBHLÍN DE PAOR • CONNIE O'CONNELL • BRYAN O'LEARY • MEGAN MCGINLEY • NIA BYRNE  
ELAINE REILLY • PADRAIG Ó'DUBHGHAILL • PADDY TUTTY • DYLAN CARLOS • CÉIN SWEENEY • JOHN MCCARTIN  
NICKY MCAULIFFE • ANNE MCAULIFFE • GRETA CURTIN • MICKEY MACCONNELL • TIM DENNEHY  
JOHN BROSNAN • LIAM FLANAGAN • CATHAL O'CURRÁIN • MARTY BARRY • SINEAD MCKENNA  
JOHN MCCANN • MARY CONROY • AIDAN COFFEY • SEAMUS SANDS

AARON GLANCY • MARTY BARRY • KEELAN MCGRATH • ADEMAR O'CONNOR • ALAN FINN • BRIAN O'LOUGHLIN • MIKIE O'GORMAN • GER NAUGHTON • CONOR MORIARTY  
GARY CURLEY • STEPHEN MCKEE • ÉAMONN O'MEACHAIR • PAX Ó'FAOLÁIN • CÁRTHACH O'FAOLÁIN • JACQUI MARTIN • LILY O'CONNOR • JOSEPH MANNION • RYAN SHERIDAN  
TIMMY O'FLAHERTY • JOE O'SULLIVAN • PETER MCKENNA • SIÚN GLACKIN • PADRAIG ÓG MAC AODHAGÁIN • DECLAN COREY • RUTH MCCROHAN • JESSIE HEALY • KEVIN MURPHY  
KEALAN O'CONNOR • SEÁN O'MEARA • EMMA O'LEARY • MARIE O'GORMAN • KATE O'GORMAN • CONOR DALY • GEAROID CURTIN • DARRAGH CURTIN • DARRAGH HORAN  
GEAROID KEATING • MAIREAD CORRIDAN • ÉIBHLÍS MURPHY • JONATHAN ROCHE • SEÁN LEAHY • GERRY HARRINGTON • PETER BROWNE • IARLAITH MCGOWAN • DEIRDRE O'BRIEN  
TIMMY CONNORS • JOHN WALSH • RAYMOND O'SULLIVAN • PAT FLEMING • MARIE COTTER • CON MOYNIHAN • DENIS O'CONNOR • MICK CULLOTY • PJ TEEHAN • MIKE RICE  
SEÁN KELLIHER • REBECCA MCCARTHY KENT • MIKE KELLIHER • CATHAL FLOOD • ROISIN O'CONNOR • NIAMH DALTON • KIRILL HEALY • MICHAEL HEALY • SEÁN BUTLER  
DIARMUID O'BRIEN • RACHEL MASTERSON • MICKEY FEARON • FIONN O'HANLON • JOHN PAUL REYNOLDS • TOM CONNELL • NIALL O'CONNOR  
MIKIE 'THE LEGEND' O'CONNOR • JOE WALSH • ROISÍN O'CONOOR • SIMON CREHAN • COLM GUILFOYLE • ROB FELL

MANY MORE NAMES TO BE ADDED

For continuous updates stay tuned to [www.patrickokeeffefestival.com](http://www.patrickokeeffefestival.com)

f POKTMF @patrickokeeffefestival @OTraditional







▲ Award-winner: accordion player, Derek Hickey



▲ Michelle and Louise Mulcahy

## CASTLEISLAND IS SET TO SALUTE O'KEEFFE

Castleisland will again become the fiddle capital of Ireland in October when the annual Patrick O'Keeffe Music Festival will take over the Kerry town.

Held in honour of the legendary fiddler and teacher, Patrick O'Keeffe (1887-1963), the festival – which runs from October 24 to October 28 – will celebrate the rich heritage of traditional music in Sliabh Luachra and the significant role played by O'Keeffe in its preservation.

The festival originated in 1993 – when uilleann piper and broadcaster, Peter Browne, suggested that an event should be held to mark the thirtieth anniversary of O'Keeffe's death.

Mary Jones, who ran Charlie Horan's Bar in Castleisland, took up the challenge and the inaugural edition of the Patrick O'Keeffe Traditional Music Festival duly took place in October 1993 and has continued annually ever since.

While this year's festival will feature three major evening concerts – on Friday, Saturday and Sunday – as well as a singing concert, the most striking aspect of the festival programme is the remarkable depth of master musicians who will be in attendance for the sessions, classes and other elements – including a multitude of All-Ireland champions and Gramdam Cheoil recipients from all over the country as well as a host of local performers.



### Patrick O'Keeffe

Born in Glountane Cross, Cordal, near Castleisland, Patrick O'Keeffe (Pádraig Ó Caoimh) was the eldest of eight children from a musical family.

Renowned as a fiddler and teacher of a host of leading musicians, O'Keeffe devised a unique system of music notation.

He is widely regarded as one of the greatest exponents of the Sliabh Luachra style of fiddle playing.

## ROSTREVOR'S LOUGH OF SONGS RETURNS

The Rostrevor Folk Club will be back in August with a second run of its *Lough of Songs* series, featuring leading traditional singers and musicians – presented in collaboration with the Carlingford Heritage Trust.

The line-up for the Club's three August sessions sees sister duo, Michelle and Louise Mulcahy, playing on August 12; the trio of Donogh Hennessy with siblings, Laura and Barry Kerr on August 19; and Cathy Jordan on August 26.

An All-Ireland senior champion on both uilleann pipes and flute, Louise Mulcahy has won numerous accolades for her musical prowess – but possibly none more meaningful than being entrusted with the custodianship of Liam O'Flynn's pipes, following his death.

Her sister, Michelle, is also an acclaimed multi-instrumentalist. A multiple award winner, Michelle is particularly lauded as a harpist.

A highly regarded singer and composer, Barry Kerr is also an acclaimed multi-instrumentalist (pipes, flute and guitar) and visual artist. His sister, Laura, is one of Ireland's finest fiddle players – with a number of recordings to her name. Donogh Hennessy is one of the best-known guitarists in traditional music and was a founder member of the band, Lúnasa.

Cathy Jordan has fronted Dervish through thousands of performances around the world and on sixteen albums over a career lasting over 35 years. The band was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards in 2019.



▲ Barry Kerr



▲ Cathy Jordan





▲ Cleek Schrey, Joseph Decosimo and Luke Richardson.



▲ Kate Stables of This is the Kit



▲ Niall Vallely's 78 Revolutions



▲ Ryan Molloy



▲ Aoife Ní Bhriain



## DIAMONDS AMONG THE MARBLE

The Marble City Sessions constitute the traditional music festival at the heart of the Kilkenny Arts Festival in August. With artist-in-residence, Martin Hayes, the Marble City Sessions bring together top class musicians in fascinating collaborations which not only delight audiences but also bring manifest joy to the performers, themselves.

This year's line-up includes some of the most innovative practitioners in traditional and folk music – whose capacity for invention is grounded in a thorough understanding and appreciation of the heritage and provenance of the music.

Among the most intriguing examples of Hayes' curatorial alchemy is the creation of the Obelisk Strings – a once-off quintet of fiddle and hardanger players, Aoife Ní Bhriain, Cleek Schrey and Liz Knowles, cellist Kate Ellis and viola da gamba player, Liam Byrne.

They will play the first half of a concert which will also feature the acclaimed concertina player, Cormac Begley, from the renowned West Kerry musical dynasty.

Another concertina master from a renowned musical dynasty, Niall Vallely from Armagh, will present his composition, *78 Revolutions*, which

premiered in Dún Laoghaire in 2018. This is an hour-long piece that explores the interaction between live musicians and pre-recorded material; contemporary music and traditional music; modern technology and century-old technology.

Niall will be joined by a stellar cast of musicians including Mick O'Brien (*pipes*), Mick McAuley (*accordion*), Kate Ellis (*cello*), Liz Knowles (*fiddle*) and Ryan Molloy (*piano*) playing with a soundscape that celebrates more than a century of traditional music.

As well as his role with the Obelisk Strings, Cleek Schrey will also perform with his long-standing partners, Joseph Decosimo and Luke Richardson, two compelling interpreters of traditional music. Together they will explore the boundaries between Irish traditional music and Appalachian old-time folk.

Kilkenny will also host the alt folk ensemble, This is the Kit, led

by English singer and musician, Kate Stables, and long-time collaborator, Jesse D. Vernon. Along with bandmates Rozi Plain, Jamie Whitby-Coles and Neil Smith, they have released a series of acclaimed albums, matched by their highly anticipated live shows.

Other performances set for the Marble City Sessions include Lisa O'Neill; Liz Knowles Niall Vallely and Niwel Tsumbu; Mick Flannery; David Murphy; Aoife Ní Bhriain and Catrin Finch; Rozi Plain; Mick McAuley and John Doyle; Aoife Ní Bhriain and Liam Byrne; Niamh Regan; and, of course, Martin Hayes who will be joined in the final concert of the festival by many of these artists for what promises to be a remarkable finale to a remarkable week of music.

For more information (including bookings) see <https://www.kilkennyarts.ie/programme>





▲ Bassekou Kouyate

## NGONI AND ECSTASY

**I**nternationally acclaimed Malian musician, Bassekou Kouyate, is a master of the *ngoni*, the West African lute, which he has brought to global audiences along with his band, Ngoni ba.

They will make a highly anticipated appearance at the Kilkenny Arts Festival in August.

Traditionally, the *ngoni* was used to accompany the stories of Malian griots. But Kouyate has placed it centre stage – where, in his hands, it has become a lead instrument.



▲ Bassekou Kouyate (Photo: Richard Kaby, CC BY 2.0)

Kouyate was born into a musical family in Garana in 1966. His father, Mustapha, was also a *ngoni* player and his mother, Yagaré Damba, was a praise singer. Playing the *ngoni* since the age of 12, he moved to Mali's capital, Bamako, in the 1980s.

His debut album, *Segu Blue*, produced by Lucy Durán, was released internationally in 2007 garnering universally positive reviews – including two awards at the 2008 BBC Radio 3 World Music Awards for Album of the Year and African Artist of the Year.

A number of acclaimed albums have followed involving collaborations with Youssou N'Dour, Toumani Diabaté and others.

He has twice been voted best artist at the *Songlines* Music Awards. For his performance in the Kilkenny Arts Festival, Kouyate will be joined by his wife, the celebrated griot singer Amy Aacko, and by his band Ngoni ba.

Composed of outstanding musicians playing *ngonis* and percussion, the band exemplifies Kouyate's fresh approach to tradition, effortlessly blending traditional Malian sounds with Cuban rhythms, rock and blues.



▲ Cherish The Ladies

## CHERISH TOUR GOES ON

**T**he Cherish The Ladies tour of Ireland continues through the autumn before their return to the United States.

After a number of July dates in Scotland, the band have a series of festival dates in Ireland – including Belfast Tradfest; Scoil Acla in Achill; the O'Carolan Harp Festival in Keadue, Co. Roscommon;

Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Wexford; Clifden Arts Festival, the Johnny Doherty Festival in Ardara, Co. Donegal; and Féile Liam O'Flynn in Naas – briefly interrupted by two Continental dates at the Lorient Festival Interceltique in Brittany and the Festival Les Traversées Tatihou in Normandy.

For dates of all Irish gigs, see the Big Gig List on page 73.

# THE MONKSTOWN SESSIONS

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Frankie Gavin and De Dannan



Paul Brady

## CORK CITY EN FÊTE IN OCTOBER

**P**reparations are well under way for the forty-fifth Cork Folk Festival which will run in various venues around Cork City from October 2 to 6.

Headlining this year's festival will be Paul Brady whose folk pedigree includes stints as a member of both the Johnstons and Planxty – as well as an acclaimed partnership with Andy Irvine.

The festival will also provide a platform for the fiddle master, Frankie Gavin, leading the latest iteration of De Dannan whose line-up includes Catherine McHugh, Diarmuid Ó Meachair, Ian Kinsella and Kaitlin Cullen-Verhauz along with one of

Cork's finest songwriters Jack O'Rourke.

Sean-nós singer, Iarla Ó Lionáird, whose career credits also include membership of the Afro-Celt Sound System and the revered Irish-American band, The Gloaming, heads up a trio which includes Cork pianist and composer Cormac McCarthy and clarinet virtuoso, Matthew Berrill.

Among the other performers who will decamp to the River Lee are the award-winning English folk singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, Seth Lakeman. Playing support to Lakeman at the Triskel will be local Cork trio, Moynihan, made up of three siblings –

Deirdre, Diarmaid and Donncha – who were founder members of the band Calico.

The Triskel will also feature the Music Network's touring trio of Nollaig Casey, Niall McCabe and Mike McGoldrick (*see page 64*).

Among the other highlights of the festival weekend will be a special concert in tribute to the renowned Sliabh Luachra fiddle player, Denis Murphy, which will feature an "all-star line-up" of traditional musicians.

Leading exponents of the Sliabh Luachra style, Matt Cranitch and Jackie Daly will also deliver a workshop.

Charlie Harris, Geraldine and Eamonn Cotter and Maeve

Donnelly will also appear in concert.

As sessions, workshops and open-air events run throughout the city, audiences will be able to catch North Cregg with Christy Leahy, Liam Flannigan, Ciaran Coughlan, Martin Leahy and Claire-Anne Lynch; as well as a concert remembering the Phoenix Bar.

A special book launch will also take place featuring one of the festival's organisers, William 'Hammy' Hammond and his new book about the Cork Folk Festival: *Reeling Down the Years*.

For tickets and further information, see <https://www.corkfolkfestival.com/tickets-for-cork-folk-festival/>



Iarla Ó Lionáird Trio: (from left) Cormac McCarthy, Iarla Ó Lionáird and Matthew Berrill



Seth Lakeman: Singer and multi-instrumentalist  
(Photo: Paul Strange)





The Fingal Mummers

## FLEADH FOR SMITHFIELD

**D**ublin City Council has announce the much-anticipated return of the two-day Irish traditional music festival, Smithfield Fleadh, later in August.

This free family-friendly outdoor event will take place on August 24 and 25 from 12pm to 6pm at Smithfield Square, Dublin city centre's largest dedicated event space.

Building on the success of the last two years, the programme includes internationally recognised performers alongside local grassroots artists.

This year will see more opportunities for audiences to engage with the artists through

sessions, workshops and céilís for all the family to enjoy.

On Saturday, August 24, the much beloved Gaylí debuts at the Smithfield Fleadh, a great way to get up and dancing for all the family.

The day will finish with stellar performances by the outstanding uilleann piper, Paddy Keenan, alongside fiddle virtuoso, Aoife Ní Bhriain, and award-winning singers, Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin and Daoirí Farrell.

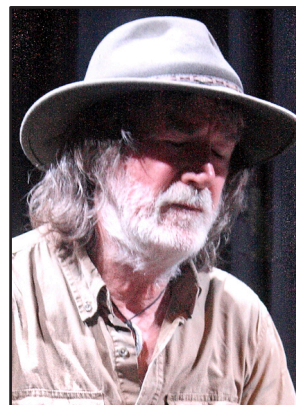
On Sunday, the ever popular Fingal Mummers will make their annual return to Smithfield. Closing the festival in exhilarating fashion will be Frankie Gavin and De Dannan on the Main Stage.

The Cobblestone Tent – curated by musicians from the Cobblestone Pub in Smithfield – will return for both days of the event.

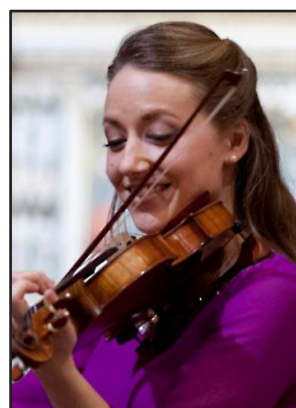
Also returning will be An Staitín Fánach, providing a platform for young musicians to showcase their talent.

An Puball Éigse makes another appearance – offering harp and bodhrán workshops alongside a performance from Ceol Connected and a special conversation curated by the Irish Traditional Music Archive featuring concertina player and dancer, Caitlín Nic Gabhann, and fiddle player, Ciarán Ó Maonaigh.

This event is organised by Dublin City Council.



Paddy Keenan



Aoife Ní Bhriain



Daoirí Farrell



Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin





# 30<sup>th</sup> william kennedy piping festival

ARMAGH 14-17  
NOV  
2024

Michael McGoldrick, John Carty & Matt Griffin

Cillian Vallely, David Doocey & Patrick Doocey

Paddi Benson & Grace Lemon with James Patrick Gavin ENGLAND

Duo Lagrange Rutkowski FRANCE

ZampogneriA with Eric Montbel ITALY/FRANCE

Angus & Kenneth MacKenzie CAPE BRETON

Calum Alex MacMillan & Ross Martin SCOTLAND

Máire Ní Ghráda & Maeve Donnelly

Tom Delany & Caroline Keane

Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn

Peter Coyle

Caoimhín Ó Fearghail

Robert Watt

Padraig McGovern

Aoife Smyth

Jarlath Henderson

Cadhla Tohill

Maeve O'Donnell

Conor Mallon

Peter McKenna

Mark Redmond

Colm Broderick

Éamonn Curran

MORE INFO & TICKETS FROM:



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National Concert Hall and National Opera House



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**big gig list**▲ **Niamh Bury**

**ACE & DEUCE OF PIPING Concert:** Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, September 21.

**ALTAN:** Old Courthouse, Lifford, August 17; Clifden Arts Festival, Clifden, September 24; Féile Liam O'Flynn, Naas, October 6; Dolan's Warehouse, Limerick, November 24; Hawk's Well Theatre, Sligo, December 3; St. Catherine's Cultural Centre, Kinsale, December 7; St. John's Church, Tralee, December 8

**AMBLE:** Telegraph Building, Belfast, November 27.

**Cormac BEGLEY:** St. Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny, August 23.

**Frances BLACK:** St. Comgall's, Belfast, August 6.

**Mary BLACK:** Gleneagle INEC Arena, Killarney, January 10; Theatre Royal, Castlebar, February 1; 3Olympia Theatre, Dublin, February 14; Vicar Street, Dublin, February 16.

**Luka BLOOM:** The Social, Gaoth Dobhair, August 8; De Barra's, Clonakilty, August 15; Finn's Bar, Borrisoleigh, August 18; The Inkwell Theatre, Minane Bridge, Co. Cork, August 31; Cloughjordan Amphitheatre, September 1; Brewery Lane Theatre, Carrick-on-Suir, October 11; Hawk's Well Theatre, Sligo, November 3; The Seanti Bar, Waterford, December 1; The Spirit Store, Dundalk, December 7.

**BONNY LIGHT HORSEMAN:** Vicar Street, Dublin, November 24.

**Muireann BRADLEY:** All Together Now Festival, Portlaoigh, August 1-4; The Allingham Festival, Ballyshannon, November 9.

**Paul BRADY:** Theatre Royal, Castlebar, August 2; Cork Folk Festival, October 2-6; Knocknarea Arena, Sligo, October 25; National Concert Hall, Dublin, November 3.

**Tara BREEN, Pádraig RYNNE & Jim MURRAY:** Ionad Cultúrtha, Ballyvourney, October 18; Lime Tree Theatre, Limerick, November 1; Source Arts Theatre, Thurles, November 2; Sea Church, Ballycotton, November 18; Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray, December 5.

**Jake BUGG:** The National Stadium, Dublin, November 21.

**Niamh BURY:** Backstage Theatre, Longford, August 2; Irish Music Week, Dublin, October 1-4; Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, November 8.

**Martin CARTHY:** Unitarian Church, Dublin, September 26.

**Nollaig CASEY with Niall McCABE & Mike McGOLDRICK:** Pavilion Theatre, Dún Laoghaire, September 24; The Sugar Club, Dublin, September 25; Clifden Town Hall, Clifden, September 27; King House,

Boyle, September 28; glór, Ennis, September 29; The Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely, October 2; Siamsa Tíre, Tralee, October 3; World Heart Beat Academy, London, October 4; Triskel Arts Centre, Cork, October 5; St. Michael's Church, Waterville, October 6.

**CEOL:** Coyote's Late Bar, Galway, August 2; Kettles Country House Hotel, August 4; Bonniclon Agricultural Show, Ballina, August 5; Clonmany Festival, Clonmany, Donegal, August 10; Macra na Feirme 2024, Athy, October 26.

**CHERISH THE LADIES:** O'Carolan Harp Festival, Keadue, Co. Roscommon, August 4; Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, The Dome, Wexford, August 8; Clifden Arts Festival, Clifden, September 26; Hawk's Well Theatre, Sligo, September 27; Johnny Doherty Festival, Ardara, Co. Donegal, September 28; Féile Liam O'Flynn, Naas, October 5; Belltable, Limerick, October 26.

**CLEAMAIRÍ FEIRSTE/BELFAST WREN BOYS:** Áras Mhic Reachtain, Belfast, August 1.

**Zoe CONWAY, John McINTYRE, Julie FOWLIS & Éamon DOORLEY:** National Concert Hall, Dublin, August 9; Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, National Opera House, Wexford, August 10.

**Zoe CONWAY & John McINTYRE with Bill WHELAN:** Carlingford Heritage Centre, August 18.

**Damien DEMPSEY:** Crown Bar, Wexford, August 3; Electric Picnic, Stradbally, August 16-18.

**Seán DONNELLY:** Portico Arts & Heritage Centre, Portaferry, September 13.

▲ **Nollaig Casey**





▲ Kieran Goss and Annie Kinsella

**Jerry DOUGLAS:** glór, Ennis, August 1.

**John DOYLE & Mick McAULEY:** Whelan's, Dublin, August 13; Set Theatre, Kilkenny, August 14; Town Hall, Dungarvan, August 15; Seantí Bar, Waterford, August 16.

**Phelim DREW:** Remebering Ronnie, Abbey Arts Centre, Ballyshannon, August 1.

**Tim EDEY:** The Rustic Inn, Abbeyshrule, August 24.

**Séamus EGAN:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, St. Iberius Church, Wexford, August 9.

**Daoirí FARRELL:** Smithfield, Dublin, August 24; Finn's Folk Club, Borrisoleigh, September 20.

**Daoirí FARRELL Trio:** Seantí Bar, Waterford, September 13.

**FEAKLE FESTIVAL:** Various Venues, Feakle, Co. Clare, August 7-12 (see page 62).

**FLEADH CHEOIL na hÉIREANN:** Various Venues, Wexford, August 4-11.

**Mick FLANNERY:** Set Theatre, Kilkenny, August 16.

**John Francis FLYNN:** All Together Now, Portlaoigh, August 1; Sandino's, Derry, August 11; The Spirit Store, Dundalk, September 26; Esker Arts Centre, Tullamore, September 27; Empire Music Hall, Belfast, September 29; O'Keeffe's, Clonmel, October 5.

**The FUREYS:** Abbey Hotel, Donegal, August 16; Hibernian Hotel, Mallow, October 4; Hotel Kilkenny, Kilkenny, October 12; Ashdown Hotel, Gorey, October 27; Crescent Concert Hall, Drogheda, December 28; Arklow Bay

Hotel, Arklow, December 29; Canal Court Hotel, Newry, December 30.

**Jake Xerxes FUSSELL:** The Workman's Club, Dublin, August 28.

**GARADICE:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, National Opera House, Wexford, August 8.

**Frankie GAVIN & DE DANNAN:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Presentation Concert Hall, Wexford, August 9; Smithfield, Dublin, August 25; Cork Folk Festival, October 2-6.

**Seán GAVIN:** Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, September 21.

**Kieran GOSS & Annie KINSELLA:** Matt Molloy's, Westport, August 8, Cultúrlann Sweeney, Kilkee, August 9.

**Lisa HANNIGAN:** Séamus Ennis Arts Centre, The Naul, August 17; The Lark Concert Hall, Balbriggan, October 26.

**Brid HARPER:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Wexford Credit Union Dome, Wexford, August 10.

**Gemma HAYES:** The Lark Concert Hall, Balbriggan, October 26.

**Martin HAYES:** St. Mogue's Church, Fethard-on-Sea, August 5; Rowe Street Church, Wexford, August 6; St. Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny, August 17; Maritime Hotel, Bantry, August 21, Pavilion Theatre, Dún Laoghaire, September 13, 18 & 22.

**HERMITAGE GREEN:** Luker's Bar, Shannonbridge, August 10; Live at the Docklands, Limerick, August 24.

**The HIGH KINGS:** Gleneagle INEC Arena, Killarney, August 10; Trim Castle Hotel, Trim, November 2.

**The HIGH STOOL PROPHETS:** Market Place Theatre, Armagh, October 24.

**Tara HOWLEY:** Balor Arts Centre, Ballybofey, September 28; Maritime Hotel, Bantry, November 1.

**Mairéad & Deirdre HURLEY:** Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, September 21.

**ÍMAR:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Clayton White's Hotel, Wexford, August 9.

**Cathy JORDAN:** Rostrevor Folk Club at Crawford's, Rostrevor, August 26.

**Inni-K:** Cape Clear, Co. Cork, August 24; The Cobblestone, Dublin, August 30.

**KEADY Traditional Music Sessions:** Arthur's Bar, Keady, Fortnightly on Saturdays. Check: <http://facebook.com/arthursharkeady>



▲ Keane, Connolly and McGorman



**KEANE, CONNOLLY & McGORMAN:** Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, September 21.

**Seán KEANE:** National Concert Hall, Dublin, August 30; Christ Church, Celbridge, October 5.

**Paddy KEENAN:** Smithfield, Dublin, August 24.

**WILLIAM KENNEDY PIPING FESTIVAL:** Various Venues, Armagh City, November 14-17 (see page 72 for line-up).

**Laura KERR, Donogh HENNESSY & Barry KERR:** Rostrevor Folk Club at Crawford's, Rostrevor, August 19.

**KÍLA:** Eats & Beats Festival, Killarney, August 4; Bank Lane, Waterford, August 24;

**KILFENORA Céili Band:** Scarriff Harbour Festival, Scarriff, August 4; All-Star Irish Charter Cruise, August 18-25

**The KILKENNYS:** Gleneagle INEC Arena, Killarney, August 2; The Seantí Bar, Waterford, August 4; The Coachman, Clonmel, August 9; Seanie's Bar, Tullaroan, August 10; McCafferty's Bar, Lettermacaward, Co. Donegal, August 24; Portico Arts Centre, Portaferry, September 15; Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan, September 28; Parkway Hotel, Dunmanway, December 14, Thatched Inn, Castlemartyr, December 21.

**KINGFISHR:** All Together Now, Portlaw, August 1-2; Set Theatre, Kilkenny, October 24 and November 1; Theatre Royal, Castlebar, October 25; Gleneagle INEC Arena, Killarney, October 26; Spiegeltent, Wexford, November 2; TLT Theatre, Drogheda, November 3; City Hall, Cork, November 5 & 6; Leisureland, Galway, November 8; Telegraph Building, Belfast, November 9.



▲ Kíla

**Steve KNIGHTLEY:** Flowerfield Arts Centre, Portstewart, November 1.

**Liz KNOWLES with Niwel TSUMBU & Niall VALLELY:** Set Theatre, Kilkenny, August 15.

**Bassekou KOUYATE & NGONI BA:** Set Theatre, Kilkenny, August 10.

**Seth LAKEMAN:** Cork Folk Festival, October 2-6.

**Lisa LAMBE:** Bere Island Arts Festival, September 21; Clifden Arts Festival, September 23.

**Oisín LEECH:** Whelan's, Dublin, November 14.

**LEMONCELLO:** Sandino's, Derry, August 11; The Sugar Club, Dublin, November 14.

**Maurice LENNON TRIO:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Wexford, August 9.

**LÚNASA:** Ballaghaderreen Arts Festival, August 8.

**Doimnic MAC GIOLLA BHRÍDE, Diane NÍ CHANAINN, Róisín CHAMBERS, Naoise MAC CATHMHAOIL, Bláithín MHIC CANA, Na Deartháireacha Ó DUBHÁIN, Becky NÍ ÉALLAITHE, Claire Frances NIC NÍLL:** Barr a' Ti, Áras Mhic Reachtain, Belfast, August 2.

**Rory MAKEM & Dónal CLANCY:** Town Hall Theatre, Dungarvan, September 20.

**MASTERS of Tradition Festival:** Bantry, August 21-25 (see page 66).

**The MARY WALLOPERS:** All Together Now, Portlaw, August 1.

**Emer MAYOCK:** Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, September 21.

**Niall McCABE:** Hawk's Well Theatre, November 20.

**Mike McGOLDRICK with Nollaig CASEY and Niall McCABE:** Pavilion Theatre, Dún Laoghaire, September 24; The Sugar Club, Dublin, September 25; Clifden Town Hall, Clifden, September 27; King House, Boyle, September 28; glór, Ennis, September 29; The Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely, October 2; Siamsa Tíre, Tralee, October 3; Triskel Arts Centre, Cork, October 5; St. Michael's Church, Waterville, October 6.

**Christy MOORE:** Leisureland, Galway, August 30 & September 14; Knocknarea Arena, Sligo, September 5; Great Northern Hotel, Bundoran, September 19 & 26; Johnstown Estate, Enfield, October 6; Theatre Royal, Castlebar, October 19.



▲ Aoife Ní Bhriain and Catrin Finch





**Michelle & Louise MULCAHY:** Rostrevor Folk Club, Crawford's, Rostrevor, August 12.

**David MUNNELLY, Mick CONNEELY & Caitríona Ní CEANNABHÁIN:** Seantí Bar, Waterford, September 8.

**George MURPHY:** Gleneagle INEC Arena, August 11; Gaelic Grounds, Limerick, August 30; Liberty Hall, Dublin, September 13; Maritime Hotel, Bantry, November 1.

**NATIONAL FOLK ORCHESTRA:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, National Opera House, Wexford, August 9.

**Aoife NÍ BHRIAIN:** Smithfield, Dublin, August 24.

**Aoife NÍ BHRIAIN & Catrin FINCH:** Parade Tower, Kilkenny, August 15.

**Aoife NÍ BHRIAIN & Liam BYRNE:** Parade Tower, Kilkenny, August 11.

**Muireann NIC AMHLAOIBH:** Ionad Dara, Goresbridge, September 6; Clifden Arts Festival, Clifden, September 21.

**Muireann NIC AMHLAOIBH TRIO:** Ionad Culturtha an Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh, Baile Bhuirne, October 25.

**Doireann NÍ GHLACÁIN:** Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, September 21.

**Paul NOONAN:** The Lark Concert Hall, Balbriggan, October 26.

**Eoghan Ó CEANNABHÁIN:** Smithfield, Dublin, August 24.

**Connie O'CONNELL, Áine & Francis O'CONNOR:** Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, September 21.

**Iarla Ó LIONÁIRD Trio:** Cork Folk Festival, October 2-6; Pavilion Theatre, Dún Laoghaire, November 17.

**Diarmuid Ó MEACHAIR, Brian McGRATH & Michael McCAGUE:** Moloney's Bar, Skough, Knockglass, September 21

**Lisa O'NEILL:** St. Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny, August 16; Town Hall, Cavan, October 17; Royal Theatre, Castlebar, October 18; Dolan's, Limerick, October 20; Town Hall Theatre, Galway, October 21; De Barra's, Clonakilty, October 24; Coughlan's Bar, Cork, October 25, 26 & 27, National Concert Hall, Dublin, November 16.

**Susan O'NEILL:** Sandino's, Derry, October 18.

**ONÓIR:** Gleneagle INEC Arena, Killarney, September 6; Monroe's Live, Galway, September 7; Hotel Kilkenny, Kilkenny, September 14.

**Declan O'ROURKE:** Cork Opera House, October 19; Vicar Street, Dublin, October 27.

**Rónán Ó SNODAIGH & Myles O'REILLY:** Sandino's, Derry, August 11.

**OXN:** All Together Now, Portlao, August 1-4.

**Niamh PARSONS & Graham DUNNE:** Seantí Bar, Waterford, August 11; Sunflower Folk Club, Belfast, August 22; Drimoleague Singing Festival, September 20-22.

**PEIA:** Liberty Hall, Dublin, August 14.

**PIPERS CROSS CÉILÍ BAND:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, St. Wexford Credit Union Dome, Wexford, August 9.

**PORANGUÍ:** Pepper Canister Church Dublin, August 14. (Music Workshop: Irishtown Gospel Hall, August 15).



▲ Doireann Ní Ghlacáin

**Niamh REGAN:** Set Theatre, Kilkenny, August 12.

**Michael ROONEY & June McCORMACK:** Moloney's Bar, Skough, Knockglass, August 31.

**The ROWSOME QUARTET:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, St. Iberius Church, Wexford, August 10.

**RUAILE BUAILE:** Castleblayney Music Festival, Castleblayney, August 2; Glenfarne Gala Festival, Glenfarne, August 3; Ballyconnell Festival, Ballyconnell, August 4; The Well, Moate, August 5; The Marquee, Drumlish, August 9; Puck Fair, Killorglin, August 11; Screen's Bar, Gilkagh, Co. Galway, August 14; Ballinamore Festival, Ballinamore, August 15; Electric Picnic, August 18; Ould Lammas Fair, Ballycastle, August 25; The Boatyard, Shannonbridge, August 30; The Imperial, Cavan, August 31; Maritime Hotel, Bantry, September 28; Darnley Lodge Hotel, Athboy, October 31.

**Pauline SCANLON & the WHILEAWAYS:** Lime Tree Theatre, Limerick, September 13; St. Columb's Hall, Derry, September 14; Maritime Hotel, Bantry, September 20; INEC Arena, Killarney, September 21; Black Box Theatre, Killarney, September 22; Vicar Street, Dublin, September 23; Opera House, Cork, September 28.

**Cleek SCHREY, Joseph DECOSIMO & Luke RICHARDSON:** Cleere's Theatre, Kilkenny, August 15.

**The SEEGER SESSIONS Revival:** Alley Theatre, Strabane, September 26; Visual, Carlow, October 4; Hawks Well Theatre, Sligo, October 5; The Market Place Theatre, Armagh, November 21; Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, November 23; Crescent Concert Hall, Drogheda, November 29; Abbey Hotel, Donegal, December 7.



▲ Mohammad Syfkin



**SEOID:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, St. Iberius Church, Wexford, August 8.

**SESSION with the PIPERS:** The Cobblestone, Dublin, August 6; September 3 and October 1.

**SÍOMHA:** All Together Now, Portlaw, August 1-4; Middle Third Farm, Oranmore, September 29.

**John SPILLANE:** De Barra's, Clonakilty, August 1; Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Wexford Arts Centre, Wexford, August 10; Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely, September 15.

**Rosie STEWART:** Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, September 21.

**Mohammad SYFKIN:** Fennelly's of Callan, August 3; Sandino's, Derry, August 11.

**TALISK:** Dolan's Warehouse, Limerick, October 22; Cyprus Avenue, Cork, October 23; The Limelight 2, Belfast, October 24; Opium, Dublin, October 25.

**TAOBH NA MARA CÉILÍ BAND:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, St. Wexford Credit Union Dome, Wexford, August 9.

**THIS IS THE KIT:** Court House, Bangor, August 10; An Taibhdhearc, Galway, August 11; Levi's Bar, Ballydehob, August 12; Kilkenny Arts Festival, St. Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny, August 14.

**TRAD ON THE ROCK FOR ROISÍN:** Ballykeeffe Amphitheatre, Kilmanagh.



▲ **Kilkenny bound:** (from left) Niall Vallely, Liz Knowles and Niwel Tsumbu.

**TRASNA (Ger O'Donnell & Trevor Sexton):** Sea Church, Ballycotton, August 1; Live at Murphy's, Abbeyfeale, August 22; Lime Tree Theatre, Limerick, November 15.

**The TUNNEY FAMILY:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, National Opera House, August 8

**The UNTHANKS:** Róisín Dubh, Galway, November 26; Empire Music Hall, Belfast, November 27; Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin, November 28.

**Ye VAGABONDS:** 3Arena, Dublin, November 29.

**Niall VALLELY:** Watagate Theatre, Kilkenny, August 16.

**The WATERBOYS:** Galway Summer Festival, Racecourse, Galway, August 19.

**The WHILEAWAYS:** Townhall Theatre, Westport, August 23; Coppermine Museum, Allihies, Co. Cork, August 31; The Seantí Bar, Waterford, October 6; St. Augustine's Church, Derry, October 25; The Blackbox, Belfast, October 27.

**The WOLFE TONES:** Breakwater Festival, Wexford, August 2; The Big Top, Letterkenny, August 17; Galway Summer Festival, Racecourse, Galway, August 23; Theatre Royal, Castlebar, August 30 & 31, SSE Arena, Belfast, October 6; 3Arena, Dublin, October 11 & 12.

## FRANK FINN TRADITIONAL SINGING WEEKEND 2024

CAWLEY'S HOTEL TUBBERCURRY,  
CO. SLIGO    OCTOBER 4-6



SPECIAL GUEST:  
**DECLAN COYNE**





## SINGING SESSION DIRECTORY

The directory lists regular weekly and monthly singing sessions with the day they *usually* meet. Many of the sessions take a break during the month of August. So to be sure that a session is actually taking place, you are advised to check by clicking the link to the organiser's website, phone or social media account. If you have a session for inclusion in the directory, please send details to [info@fonn.online](mailto:info@fonn.online).

**Bandon Singers Club**, Ray O'Mahony's Bar, Bandon. *Second Sunday of month.*

**Belfast Singing Circle**, Garrick Bar, Chichester Street, Belfast. *First Wednesday of month.*

**Blackbird Singing Session**, *Second Tuesday of month on Zoom.*

**Bray Singers' Circle**, Tennis Club, Vevay Road, Bray. *Third Sunday of month.*

**Chapel Gates Singers Club**, Tubridy's, Cooraclare, Co. Clare. *Last Friday of month.*

**Ciorcal na nAmhráin**, Shamrock Bar, Falcarragh, Co. Donegal. *Third Wednesday of month.*

**Clé Club**, Liberty Hall, Dublin 1, *Third Wednesday of month in person. First Monday of month on Zoom.* [www.cleclub.org](http://www.cleclub.org)

**Clew Bay Folk Club**, Matt Molloy's Pub, Bridge St. Westport, *Second Sunday of the month.*

**Cork Singers Club**, An Spailpín Fánach, Main St, Cork, *Weekly on Sunday.*

**Croonerista Social Club**, CIE Sports & Social Club, Inchicore Sq. North, Inchicore, *Second Friday of month.*

**Crown & Shamrock**, Crown & Shamrock Inn, Antrim Rd, Belfast. *Second Monday of month*

**Cullinan's Bar Session**, Cullinan's Bar, Church St, Ennistymon. *Third Tuesday of month*

**Dan & Molly's Singing Circle**, Dan & Molloy's Bar, Ballyboy, Kilcormac, Co. Offaly. *Third Wednesday of month.*

**Donnelly's Session**, Donnelly's of Barna, Co. Galway. *First Wednesday of month.*

**Down Singers' Circle**, Imperial Bar, Bangor, Co. Down. *Third Saturday of month.*

**Drinagh Singers Club**, Connolly's Gaelic Bar, Drinagh. *First Sunday of month.*

**Drogheda Singers**, Fairgreen Bar, Drogheda. Hybrid live and Zoom. *Weekly on Wednesday*

**Dundalk Singing Circle**, The Wee House, Anne St, Dundalk. *Weekly on Tuesday.*

**Dunmanway Singing Session**, The Greyhound Bar, Dunmanway. *Last Saturday.*

**Eblana Sessions**, Eblana Club, Eblana Ave, Dún Laoire. *Third Saturday of month*

**Ennis Singers Club**, Café on the Green, Lifford, Ennis. *Second Friday of month.*

**Feakle Singing Session**, Short's Bar, Feakle. *Second Saturday of month.*

**Góilín Traditional Singers**, Teachers' Club, Parnell Sq, Dublin. *Weekly on Friday.* [www.goilin.com/](http://www.goilin.com/)

**Howth Singing Circle**, Abbey Tavern, Howth, Co. Dublin. *First Thursday of month.* [www.howthsingingcircle.com/](http://www.howthsingingcircle.com/)

**Hughes' Bar Session**, Hughes' Bar, Ballinamore Bridge, Co. Galway. *Third Friday of month.*

**Inishowen Traditional Singers' Circle**, alternating between North Pole, Drumfries, Inishowen and McFeeley's Bar, Clonmany, Inishowen. *Second Friday of month.* [www.inishowensinging.ie/](http://www.inishowensinging.ie/)

**Jim O' The Mills**, Upperchurch, Co. Tipperary. *Every Thursday.*

**Killala Bay Folk Club**, Lynn's of Killala, Co. Mayo. *First Friday of month.*

**Kilmaley Singing Session**, Bogdale House, Kilmaley, Co. Clare. *Third Saturday of month.*

**Kinvara Singing Circle**, Green's Bar, Kinvara, Co. Galway. *First Monday of month.*

**Limerick Singing Session**, The White Horse Tavern, Limerick. *Third Monday of month and on Zoom on second and fourth Monday of month.*

**Lord Edward Session**, The Lord Edward Bar, Christchurch Pl, Dublin. *Second Tuesday of month.*

**Malahide Singing Circle**, St. Sylvester's GAA Club, Malahide, Co. Dublin. *Last Thursday of month.*

**Mullagh Singing Session**, Moroney's Bar, Mullagh, Co. Clare. *Third Friday of month.*

**Mullingar Singing Circle**, Montgomery's Whiskey Bar, Mullingar. *First Sunday of month.*

**Navan Singing Circle**, The Lantern, Watergate St, Navan. *Second Tuesday of month.*

**Night Before Larry Got Stretched**, The Cobblestone, King St North, Dublin 7. *First Sunday of month except January, July and August.*

**Nightingale Singing Session**, American Bar, Dock Street, Belfast. *Third Tuesday of month.*

**North Wexford Traditional Singing Session**, French's, Main St, Gorey. *Last Tuesday of month.*

**Rainbow Singing Session**, McHugh's Bar, Glenfarne, Co. Leitrim. 5pm-8pm. *Fourth Sunday of month.*

**Robbie's First Friday**, Cnoc na Gaoithe CCE Cultural Centre, Tulla, Co. Clare. *First Friday of month.*

**Séamus Ennis Arts Centre**, The Naul, Co. Dublin. Hybrid live and Zoom. *Second Thursday of month.*

**Shanaglish Singing Session**, Whelan's, Shanaglish, Gort, Co. Galway. *Last Friday of month.*

**Singing in the Crane**, Crane Bar, Sea Rd, Galway. [www.facebook.com/david.larkin.3975](http://www.facebook.com/david.larkin.3975)

**Skerries Folk Club**, Upstairs in Joe May's Pub, Harbour Road, Skerries. *Last Sunday of month*

**Sliabh Liag Singing Circle**, Evelyn's Central Bar, Carrick, Co. Donegal. *Usually once a month.* For precise date check [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069613394114](http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069613394114)

**Sligo Traditional Singers' Circle**, Durkin's Bar, Ballinacarrow, Co. Sligo. *Second Wednesday of month*

**Song Central**, Chaplin's Bar, Hawkins Street, Dublin 2. *Second Sunday of month.*

**South Roscommon Singers Circle**, Murray's Bar, Knockcroghery, Co. Roscommon. *First Thursday of month*

**Sunflower Folk Club**, Sunflower Bar, Union Street, Belfast. *Weekly on Thursdays.* [www.facebook.com/sunflowerfolk](http://www.facebook.com/sunflowerfolk)

**Tarred & Feathered Folk Session**, Clontarf Golf Club, Donnycarney Rd, Dublin *First Monday of the month.*

**The Thatch**, Crinkill, Birr, Co. Offaly. *First Monday of month.* [www.facebook.com/TheThatchCrinkill](http://www.facebook.com/TheThatchCrinkill)

**Tower Singing Circle**, Shoreline Hotel, Donabate, Co. Dublin *Second Monday of month.*

**Tuam Singers Club**, Reapy's Bar, Tullinadaly Rd, Tuam. *Third Monday of month.*

**West Limerick Singing Club**, Ramble Inn, Main St, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick. *First Friday of month.* [www.facebook.com/mary.oconnor.33483](http://www.facebook.com/mary.oconnor.33483)

**Wexford Traditional Singers' Circle**, Mary's Bar, John's Gate St, Wexford. *Third Friday of month.*



## SINGING SESSION PLANNER

Most – though not all – of the regular singing sessions around Ireland take place on a particular day of a specific week of the month. So this planner provides an indication of where a session may be taking place on any day of the month. But of course you should always check with the session organisers (see *opposite for contact information*) before heading out for the afternoon or evening – especially since some take a break during the month of August. All sessions listed below are in person unless followed by <sup>(2)</sup>.

### WEEK 1

**Monday:** Clé Abhaile <sup>(2)</sup>; Kinvara Singing Circle; Tarred & Feathered Folk Session; The Thatch.

**Tuesday:** Dundalk Singing Circle

**Wednesday:** Belfast Singing Circle; Donnelly's Session; Drogheda Singers

**Thursday:** Howth Singing Circle; Jim O' The Mills; South Roscommon Singers Circle; Sunflower Folk Club.

**Friday:** An Góilín; Robbie's First Friday, Tulla; Skibbereen Singers Club†; West Limerick Singing Club.

**Sunday:** Cork Singers Club; Drinagh Singers Club; Mullingar Singing Circle; The Night Before Larry Got Stretched.

### WEEK 2

**Monday:** Crown and Shamrock; Limerick Singing Session <sup>(2)</sup>; Tower Singing Circle.

**Tuesday:** Dundalk Singing Circle; Lord Edward Session; Navan Singing Circle

**Wednesday:** Drogheda Singers; Sligo Singers' Circle

**Thursday:** Jim O' The Mills; Séamus Ennis Arts Centre; Sunflower Folk Club.

**Friday:** Croonerista Social Club; Ennis Singers Club; An Góilín; Inishowen Singers' Circle

**Saturday:** Feakle Session

**Sunday:** Bandon Singers Club; Clew Bay Folk Club; Cork Singers Club; Song Central

### WEEK 3

**Monday:** Limerick Singing Session; Tuam Singers Club.

**Tuesday:** Cullinan's Bar; Dundalk Singing Circle; Nightingale Session.

**Wednesday:** Ciorcal na nAmhráin; Clé Club; Dan & Molly's Singing Circle; Drogheda Singers

**Thursday:** Jim O' The Mills; Sunflower Folk Club.

**Friday:** An Góilín; Hughes' Bar Session; Mullagh Singing Session; Wexford Singers.

**Saturday:** Down Singers Circle; Eblana Session; Kilmaley Singing Session.

**Sunday:** Bray Singing Circle; Cork Singers Club

### WEEK 4\*

**Monday:** Limerick Singing Session <sup>(2)</sup>

**Tuesday:** Dundalk Singing Circle

**Wednesday:** Drogheda Singers

**Thursday:** Jim O' The Mills; Sunflower Folk Club.

**Friday:** An Góilín

**Sunday:** Cork Singers Club; Rainbow Singing Session, Glenfarne.

### LAST WEEK\*

**Monday:** Limerick Singing Session <sup>(2)</sup>

**Tuesday:** Dundalk Singing Circle; North Wexford Singing Session.

**Wednesday:** Drogheda Singers

**Thursday:** Jim O' The Mills; Malahide Singing Circle; Sunflower Folk Club.

**Friday:** Chapel Gates Singers; An Góilín; Shanaglish Singing Circle; Skibbereen Singers Club†;

**Saturday:** Dunmanway Session  
**Sunday:** Cork Singers Club; Skerries Folk Club.

\* Usually the fourth time a day falls in the month will be the last week. But, of course, there will always be a few days each month that occur for a fifth time. Some sessions, like the Rainbow, are held in the fourth week, even when there may be a fifth Sunday in the month. Others, like Gorey and Malahide, are held on the last Tuesday or Thursday (respectively) regardless of whether it may be the fourth or fifth time the day has occurred in a particular month.

† The Skibbereen Singers Club usually meets on first Fridays but occasionally it meets on the last Friday of the preceding month. The Singing in the Crane Session in Galway meets frequently but not on a specific day each month as does the Sliabh Liag Singing Circle in Co. Donegal.

### ADVANCE NOTICE:

## NORTH WEXFORD TRADITIONAL SINGING FÉILE

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LOCH GARMAN ARMS, GUAIRE/GOREY, LOCH GARMAN/CO.WEXFORD

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For more information contact: [www.northwexfordtraditionalsingingcircle.ie](http://www.northwexfordtraditionalsingingcircle.ie)  
email: [nwtscgorey@gmail.com](mailto:nwtscgorey@gmail.com)



47<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL

# GALYSHANNON

FOLK AND TRADITIONAL

# MUSIC FESTIVAL

1<sup>ST</sup> - 4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2024



Aslan  
No Crows  
Paddy Casey  
Seamie O'Dowd  
Dave Munnelly Band  
More Power to your Elbow  
Farah Bogle • Niall McCabe  
Coscan • Fiddler of London • Showcase

Street  
Music!  
Legend  
Session

when  
met Patsy Cline  
featuring  
Seamie O'Dowd  
Farah Bogle

Art  
Show



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