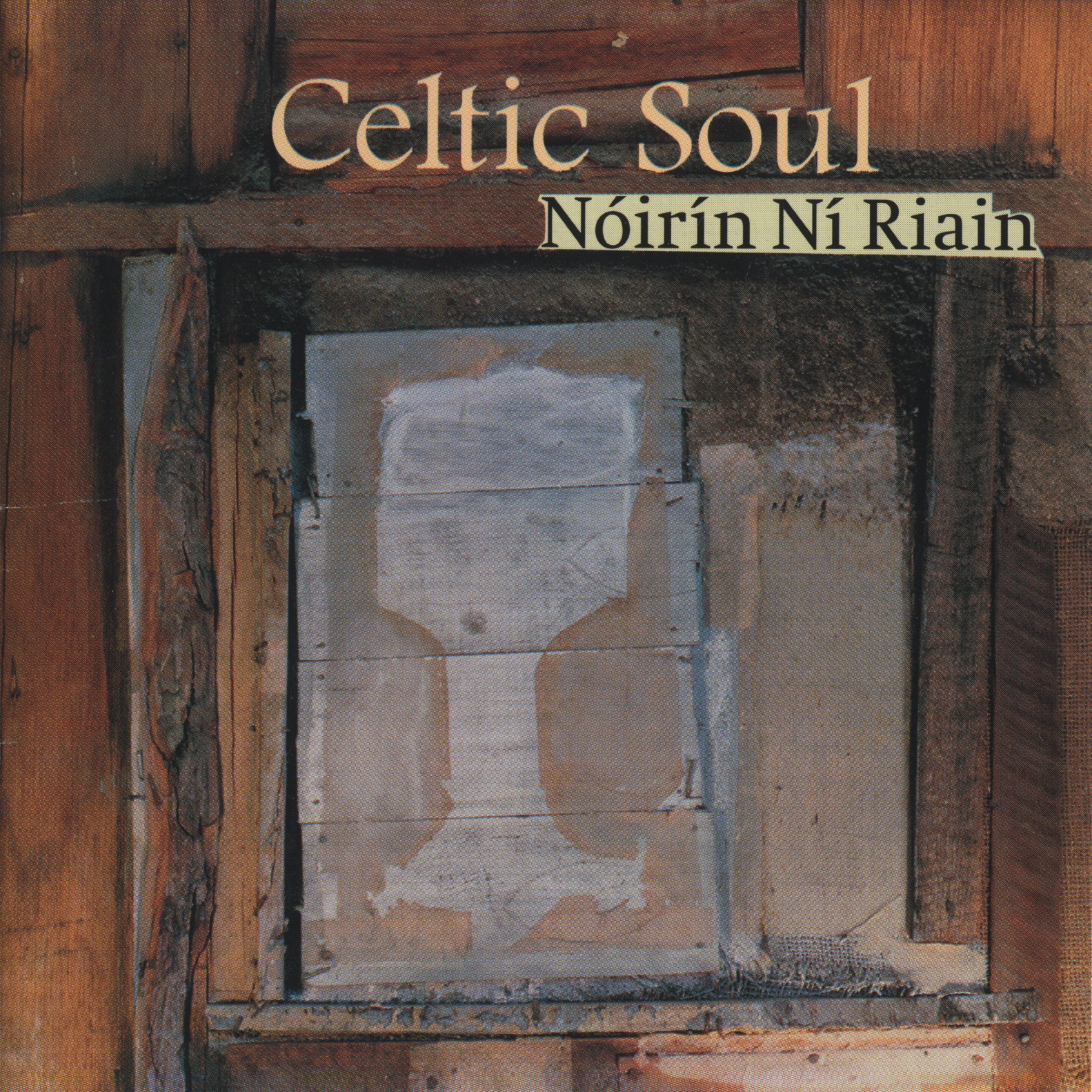


Celtic Soul

Nóirín Ní Riain



Deep down in my own soul now, I feel a huge humility on the one hand, and pride on the other, in just being the vehicle or medium to convey a tiny glimpse of this Celtic 'Pure Drop' to you. Yet no tradition with any present-day life of its own stands still, so that every performance is encapsulated in elements which are true to the performer and her contemporary experience at the time. Listening to these timeless, eternal songs in this context is something like visiting a state-of-the-art museum, where, under the most sophisticated technology, ageless artifacts can be viewed and reviewed over and over again.

The Greek god Janus had one head and two faces, one looking forward, the other behind (and gave his name to January, the month of possibility and transition). This mythological figure also appears in Celtic tradition, as in this two-faced tricephalic stone head from Corleck in County Cavan.

Singing, for me, and indeed the whole of life, is mirrored in this Janus image. There's the solitary side to singing, an integral part of one's own healing and growth, an inward and backward face protecting and fostering that inner voice which enables the outward voice to fly. The social, forward-looking face represents the people whom you touch along the way, and the interaction of energies from, and with, others.

In Celtic tradition there is the legendary magic cauldron, horn of plenty and platter that could never empty. With roots in the same image is the Chalice, sacred vessel, that represents both the illuminating goal of the quest and the heroic quest itself. This





little chalice of a dozen songs draws together all the strands of the private and the public on the deepest level: firstly, the songs themselves, for years a totally private expression for me; then the recording of them in the warm, womb-like former Shaker Chapel in Enfield, New Hampshire, and the enchanted barn-studio of Paul Winter's farm in Connecticut, where I sang my heart out, every note scrutinized, and, indeed, enhanced, by a family of bats.

Ten songs are drawn from the deepest and purest well of the sean nós (old style) tradition, the innermost point of the perfect rose. At the very heart of this rose, the image of the Buddha in deep contemplation from Hindi tradition sits easily with the innate quest for truth and purity of the Celtic tradition. Consequently, two Hindi spiritual songs sit side by side naturally with the sean nós tradition, and although we could discuss, justifiably perhaps, the similarities between both traditions, no academic or philosophical theories will speak as loudly as the simple, honest admission that I just LOVE singing them!

A priest friend of mine, comparing the role of preacher and singer, said: "Always remember, whether you sing to two thousand, to twenty, or to two, once you are singing from out of your own true space, then there is the potential of affecting or moving just ONE person out there who is herself at a certain open space at that moment."

Singing out from the truest space I know, my deepest prayer is that this ONE person may be you.

Le grá ó -

Máirín

1 PORT NA bPÚCAÍ—Song of the Pooka

Is bean ón slua sí mé, do tháinig thar toinn
Is do goideadh san oíche me tamall thar lear
Is go bhfuilim sa ríocht seo fé gheas' mná sídhe
Is ní bheidh ar an saol seo ach go nglaofaidh an coileach.
Is caitheadsa féin tabhairt fá'n deis isteach
Ni thaithneamh liom é ach caithfeadh tabhairt fé
Is caitheadsa féin tabhairt fén lios isteach.
Is ná déinig aon ní leis an dream thíos sa leas.

I am a woman from the fairy host who travelled over the seas.

I was stolen in the night and taken beyond the sea.

**And I am held hostage in the kingdom by the fairy women
and I can only be in this world until the moment the cock crows.**

I know I have tasks to do here which I don't like but must comply with.

**I must return to the fort and do not have anything to do
with this body of fairy people down in the fairy mound.**

It is so appropriate to begin our Celtic journey—a journey filled with adventures in and out of the otherworld, the world of nature, the world of unreality, of make-believe—with this song which integrates and balances them all. Legend has it that a fisherman from the Blasket Islands—the furthestmost point of Ireland and the nearest point to America—one night fell asleep in his little currach at sea. While he slept, he heard these sounds and on waking and returning home, he fingered out this tune on his melodeon. He believes it is from the spirit world of the Pooka (the fairies), but there are others who will say that the sleep sounds were the humpback whales communicating with one another throughout the night. One way or another, it is definite that although this tune came to light relatively recently, at the turn of the century, it embodies in its essence every facet of human and otherworldly experience.

Nóirín Ní Riain—voice Russ Landau—bass, keyboard, drums Kenny Mazur—guitar

2 SEOLADH NA nGAMHNA FÉ'N bhFÁSACH—Driving the Calves to Pasture

Lá dá rabhas ar thaobh a' ghleanna
Ag seoladh na ngamhna fé'n bhfásach
Casadh orm spéirbhean mhaorga mhaisiúil
Chiúintais bhanúil náireach;
D'fhiosraíos fein den spéirbhean chailce
“A' dtiocfá seal im' pháirtíocht?
'S le fáinne an lae beam araon 'nár seasamh
Ag seoladh na ngamhna fé'n bhfásach.”

“Ag seoladh na ngamhna sea d'fhág mé an baile
'Gus ceann ní bhfaighidh go lá dhíobh
Tá m'athair gan chéill im' dhiadh sa bhaile
'S mo mháithrín buartha cráite.”
“Gheobham cead saor ó mhaor na coille
Féar a thabhairt go lá dhóibh
“S le fáinne an lae beam araon 'nár seasamh
Ag seoladh na ngamhna fé'n bhfásach.”

“Tá crainnín cúmhra i lúb na coille
'Gus ratham araon go lá ann,
Beidh ceol na n-éan dár síorchur a chodladh
“S tuilleadh 's tortha a' fás air.”
“A rún mo chléibh, ná biodh ort aon mhairg
Ni baol duinn maor ná paiste
Seo dhuit póigín ar bharra mo bhaise
'S a stóirín, 's a stóirín, mo chúig céad slán leat.”

**One day while I was in the glen, driving the calves to pasture,
I met a beautiful noble woman, quiet, gentle, feminine, modest.
I asked this white fair lady: “Will you join me for awhile and at the dawning of the day,
both of us will be up and driving the calves to pasture.”**

**“I was driving the calves when I left home and I won't find one of them until morning.
My father is demented at home and my mother is worried and distraught.**

We will get permission easily from the caretaker of the wood to give them grass until morning, and with the dawning of the day, we will be up and driving the calves to pasture.”

“There’s a sweet-smelling little haven at the edge of the wood and we’ll both go there ’till morning. The song of the birds will lull us to sleep and there’s an abundance of fruit growing there for us. And, O, Love of my Heart, don’t have the slightest fear because there’s nobody at all to interrupt us. Here’s a little kiss for you on the tip of my fingers, and O, My Dearly Loved One, my five hundred blessings be with you always.”

Picture this: on a rainfilled day, a seventeen year old girl anxiously awaits the arrival of a state examiner for her final Leaving Certificate. She sits before a piano in a tiny music room in a Northern Ireland boarding school, but although music is one of her examination subjects, she is heading to study Law at University in Dublin after she leaves school in two months time. The dreaded stranger arrives, hears her play and express her ambitions, and immediately drives to her parents’ home to plead with them to let her go to his university in Cork to study music, an exercise which he would closely monitor and observe. The parents agree, and music and singing from that moment on totally consume her daily life.

That young girl was me; the mentor, right up to his death nearly twenty years ago, was a highly gifted Cork musician called Pilib Ó Laoghaire. In his youth he had collected hundreds of songs in the Rínn Gaeltacht, County Waterford, and I was highly privileged to have been the sole recipient of many, many of these songs directly from him. This is one of the first songs I remember receiving from him, and singing it now brings back so many memories, smells, tastes and feelings of that time, and indeed, the undulating outline of the rich, luscious landscape of Waterford.

Nóirín Ní Riain—voice, shruti box Eugene Friesen—cello Jordan Rudess—synthesizer

3 BASO MORE—Ode to Mira Bai

Refrain: Baso more nenami Nande Lal.

Adhara sudharasa murli rajat

Nena bane vishal.

Mira ke prabhu!

Mohini murat samwari surat.

Ur vai janti mal.

O, exquisite child, Krishna, son of Nand, you will always live in my eyes.

The sweet-sounding flute on your lips, your big eyes,
your handsome dark face and the necklace of violet gems.

Mira calls on you!

India, its culture, people and song, has become part of me over the past ten years, and learning spiritual songs in Hindi there and here at home has given me hours of inspiration and courage. Influences and guidances throughout our lives, although they may seem to appear haphazardly, like the flower that blossoms, or the babe that takes its first step, all have their own time and season. I well remember that on my first visit to India—a cultural exchange between the Irish and the Indian governments in 1981—I discovered with people there that to count to ten in our own Irish language—aon, dó, trí, ceathar, cuíg, sé, seacht, ocht, naoi, deich—created huge resonances with counting from one to ten in Sanskrit. Our Gaelic (Gaeilge) is part of the family of Celtic languages which are in turn part of Indo-European culture. Yet, stronger for me was the direct experience of singing and identifying with the inspired spiritual songs of India and, furthermore, the reenactment of this experience by vulnerably and humbly singing in the midst of the source, songs such as this one and the Tagore song which you'll hear later in the album. This song of entreaty to Krishna by Mira Bai (1498-1547), India's most famous female saint from Rajasthan, I received from Veronica Doubleday, author, artist, singer, drummer and dear friend.

Nóirín Ní Riain—voice, supeti (Indian harmonium) Steve Gorn—bansuri (Indian flute)
Jordan Rudess—synthesizer Ira Landgarten—tanpura

4 CUCÚÍN—The Cuckoo

“Cucúín” ars’ an cúicín, “cá ndeanfaim an samhradh, cá ndeanfaim an samhradh?”

“Cucúín” ars’ an cúicín, “déanfam sa ngleannt’ é, déanfam sa ngleannt’ é.”

“Cucúín” ars’ an cúicín, “cé gheobhaimid inár dteannt’ ann, cé gheobhaimid inér dteannt’ ann?”

“Cucúín” ars’ an cúicín, “beidh an dreoilín ’s a clann ann, an dreoilín ’s a clann ann.”

“Cucúín” ars’ an cúicín, “cad a bheidh ann dúinn, cad a bheidh ann dúinn?”

“Cucúín” ars’ an cúicín, “beidh mil agus leamhnacht, beidh mil agus leamhnacht.”

“Cucúín” ars’ an cúicín, “an baol dúinn an seabhac ann, an baol dúinn an seabhac ann?”

“Cucúín” ars’ an cúicín, “éalóimid fé chrann uaidh, éalóimid fé chrann uaidh.”

"Cucuin" said the little cuckoo, "Where will we nest this summer?"

"Cucuin" said the little cuckoo, "We will make it in the glen."

"Cucuin" said the little cuckoo, "What will be there for us?"

"Cucuin" said the little cuckoo, "There will be honey and new milk in plenty."

"Cucuin" said the little cuckoo, "Need we fear the hawk?"

"Cucuin" said the little cuckoo, "We will escape from him under the tree."

A little lullaby as old as the soil, where under the guise of a conversation between two cuckoos, all the child's hidden fears are allayed through question and answer. I've always loved singing this song; its basic version I think I learned from a County Cork rendering.

Nóirín Ní Riain—voice Jerry O'Sullivan—uilleann pipes Paul Winter—soprano sax
Paul Halley—pipe organ, synthesizer Glen Velez—bodhran Russ Landau—drums Lou Volpe—guitar

5 Ode To Bridget

Gabhaim molta Bríghde, Iníon í le hÉireann,
Iníon le gach tír í, molaimís go léir í!

Lóchrann geal na Laighneach, soils' ar feadh na tíre,
Ceann ar óigheacht Éireann, ceann na mban ar míne.

Tig an geimhreadh dian dubh, gearra lena géire,
Ach ar lá le Bríghde, gar duinn Earrach Éireann.
Molaimís go léir í!

I sing loudly the praises of Bridget.

She it is who is daughter, not just of Ireland, but of all the countries of the world.

Let us all praise her!

**A shining lantern of Lenster, a flame throughout the land,
Leader of the women of Ireland, one of the finest women ever.**

**The hard dark winter comes, short and sharp,
But once Bridget's day appears, Ireland's Spring is not far behind.
Let us all praise her!**

Bridget—goddess and Christian saint—taps into the pagan, pre-Christian roots of ours that still, thankfully, are part of each one of us Celts! Christianity did not supplant paganism, but superimposed itself, like a hermit crab, on pre-existing patterns. Brigid as goddess, whose time is Imbolg, the pagan festival of Spring, becomes St. Bridget whose feastday also falls on February 1st, the first day of spring in Ireland. Brigid, the saint, born about 457, is patroness of poetry and learning, of healing and of craftsmanship, and her influence is not confined to Ireland alone. Legend has it that the medieval knights of chivalry chose Bridget as their patroness, and it was they who first called their wives 'brides'.

I have felt very close to Bridget recently because for seven days last September I carried the Flame of Bridget at the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, China. Apparently, in all Brigidine convents, from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Century, according to her wishes, a flame was kept alive to symbolise hospitality, warmth, growth and light. In 1993, the Brigidine sisters of Ireland rekindled this flame in Kildare, and out of the blue, not knowing that I was scheduled to sing in Beijing for a Geneva-based group, they asked me to carry this flame for them. This I did thanks to the ingenious plan devised by the sisters of carrying the flame aboard the aeroplane in a charcoal handwarmer which lasts for up to eight hours! The only other dwelling-place to contain this perpetual flame of Bridget is my home, and it inspires me as it burns beside me now!

Here's to the many faces of Bridget in all of us!

**Nóirín Ní Riain—voice, shruti box Eugene Friesen—cello Jordan Rudess—harp synth
Glen Velez—kanjira Ira Landgarten—tanpura**

6 THUGAMAR FHÉIN AN SAMHRADH LINN—Summer, Summer

Samhradh, samhradh, bainne na ngamhna,
Thugamar fhéin an samhradh linn
Tríd an bhfraoch go dtí ar dtig fhéinig,
Thugamar fhéin an samhradh linn.
Samhradh, samhradh, bainne na ngamhna,
Thugamar fhéin an samhradh linn,
Samhradh buí ó luí na ngréine,
Thugamar fhéin an samhradh linn.

'S é seo an samhradh thiocfaidh go haerach,
Thugamar fhéin an samhradh linn,

Samhradh buí ó luí na ngreine.
Thugamar fhéin an samhradh linn.

**Summer, summer, the calves milk, we have brought the summer with us.
Through the heather back to our own house, we have brought in the summer.**

**Summer, summer, the calves milk, we have brought the summer with us.
Yellow summer to the fall of the sun, we have brought in the summer.**

We learn this song “ón gliabhán,” as we say, which means “from the cradle.” Traditionally, young girls heralded the summer by dancing around the Maypole. This five-note song I find mildly hypnotic, and it is undoubtedly one of the oldest melodies on this planet.

**Nóirín Ní Riain—voice Paul Halley—piano Jordan Rudess—synthesizer
Jerry O’Sullivan—uilleann pipes Glen Velez—rik, shaker Gordon Gottlieb—hi-hat, caxixi (Brazilian
baskets) Ray Spiegel—dholki**

7 SUANTRAITHE—Lullabies

’S óabháin, ’s óabháin, ’s óabháin, mo ghrá
’S óabháin mo leanbh agus codail go la.
Agus d’imigh do Mhama le tuilleadh trá
Agus níl fhios am beo cé hé.
’S óabháin, ’s óabháin, ’s óabháin mo ghrá,
’S óabháin mo leanbh go moch a bhobo.

Déirin dé, déirin dé, tá’n gabhar donn ag labhairt sa bhfraoch
Déirin dé, déirin dé, ’s tusa mo leanbh go héiri an lae.
Déirin dé, déirin dé, tá’n gabhar donn ag labhairt sa bhfraoch
Déirin dé, déirin dé ’s tusa mo leanbh go héiri an lae.

**’S oabhain, ’s oabhain, ’s oabhain, my little love
’S oabhain, my little one and sleep until daybreak.**

And your mother

**Deirin de, deirin de, the brown goat is crying in the heather
Deirin de, deirin de, you are my little child until daybreak.**

Lullabies, the world over, are a fascinating study of human complexity and emotion. More often than not, a true lullaby is much more indicative of the mental state of the mother than of her wish to lull her child to sleep, and so often her frustrations find a legitimate voice through song. The first one here must be one of the most inspired songs in the world. From the moment I heard it and then learned it—from Sorcha Ní Ghuairim of Connemara—it held a fascination for me, and the magical vocables of 's oabhain clearly come from another era, culture and world. As I sang it one day, at Paul's farm, it seemed to adopt a life of its own and slip naturally into this jaunty Clare lullaby.

**Nóirín Ní Riain—voice Jordan Rudess—harp synth Paul Halley—pipe organ, synthesizer
Gordon Gottlieb—congas, surdo Ray Spiegel—triangle**

8 CITÍ NA gCUMANN—Kitty, My Love

Ó thánas dtí'n mbaile seo 'réireach, is do bhí sé 'gam déanach go leor,
'S mé ar intinn an margadh 'déanamh 's ná scarfainn léi féin go deo
Níor thainig a deadi chun réitigh is car dhona liom é no dhó,
Bheirim slán agus beannacht le hÉirinn is ní chasfaidh mé féin go deo.

Níor cuireadh romham cuireadh na fáilte ó thánas don tsráid seo thíos
Ón uair a dh'airig mo ghrá geal gur thugas mo lámh do mhnaoi.
Is doigh leo go bhfuilimse pósta, is dár ndoigh mo stór, ní fíor,
Dar a leabhar atá thíos i mo phóca is ag mealladh ban óg a bhíos.

Ó Deanfainnse cupard ar néatacht nó muileann bheadh gléasta ar abhainn,
Bád no coite da réir sin a bhearfadh sinn araon anonn—
Scriobhfainnse Laidin no Gaeilge chomh cliste le h-aon mhac rí—
'S a Dhia, nár dheacair bheith daor orainn mar go bpósfainn gan aon rud í.

Is, a Chití na gcumann, ná séan mé, siul feasta 'gus éalaigh liom
Go gleanntán coille nó sle 'muigh nó amach fé scáth na gcrann—
Phósfainn i ngan fhios don saol tú is don sagart da m'bhféidir sinn
'S a Dhia, nar dheacair bheith daor orainn mar go bpósfainn gan aon rud i.

O, I came to this town late enough last night intending to make the deal that I wouldn't separate from her forever. But her father never showed up and although it should not have mattered to me, I now bid farewell and goodbye to Ireland and I never will return again.

I was given no invitation or welcome since I came to this town, since my loved one heard that I had already given my hand to another woman. They think that I am married and really, my love, it is not true. By the book (the Bible) that I have here in my pocket, I swear that I only charmed young women.

I could make a neat cupboard or a mill set upon a river, a boat or ferry fit to take us both away. I could write Latin or Irish as cleverly as any king's son, and, O, God, isn't it hard to be cruel to us when I am willing to marry her without a penny?

And, O, Kitty, my love, do not desert me, come on and elope with me to a little wooded glen or mountain or under the shadow of a tree for awhile. I will marry you secretly without the priest knowing about it, if I can, and, O, God, isn't it hard to be cruel on us when I am willing to marry her without a penny?

What makes this song so, so attractive and seductive for me is the two centers of tonality within the music. Just as you're beginning to relax into the "tonic" or "doh" and sip some of that tonic, you're immediately swept off again out of complacency and off balance! A real lesson in life through song! Yet this love song is a real body and soul toner, and, as in many of the other songs here, I owe its presence in my life to Pilib Ó Laoghaire.

Nóirín Ní Riain—shruti box Joanie Madden—tinwhistle Paul Winter—soprano sax
Jordan Rudess—harp synth Paul Halley—pipe organ Glen Velez—bodhran
Ray Spiegel—dholki Ira Landgarten—tanpura

9 KAY BOSHILAY—Ode To Rabindranath Tagore

Kay boshilay aaji hridayashanay bhubane shwaro probhu.
Jagailay anupamo sundaro shoba hay hridayeshwaro.
Shahosha phutilo phulo manjari shukano tarutay,
Pashanay bahay shudha dhara.

**The all-pervasive God of the Universe, you are in my heart today.
The beauty is everywhere: flowers blossom on dry branches and where it was dried up,
arid and parched, now there is water.**

About three years ago, I was singing at a concert in Lismore in County Waterford. In the audience was this beautiful sari-clad woman—like a vision. To this day, Anita and I have been soul friends. She is a

wonderful Bengali singer and we have spent many, many hours together in her simple cottage home in County Waterford where she has been sharing her songs, exercises and philosophy with me, amicably surrounded by her two little sons and a family of huge Irish wolfhounds! Singing this Tagore song now is like completing some kind of strange earth cycle, on two levels.

Firstly, Tagore in his time was also moved by Irish songs and sang them to himself. "When I went to England I did hear some of the Irish melodies sung, and learnt them too.... They were simple, mournful and sweet.... When I came back home I sang the Irish melodies I had learnt to my people. 'What is the matter with Rabi's voice?' they exclaimed. 'How funny and foreign it sounds!' They even felt my speaking voice had changed its tone." (*Reminiscences*, Rabindranath Tagore, London, 1961)

Secondly, and much more importantly, I have been deeply moved in identifying with the words of our poet, William Butler Yeats, who exquisitely defines his own connection with eastern tradition. In 1912, on meeting Tagore, Yeats wrote of Gitanjali; "These lyrics...display in their thought a world I have dreamed of all my life long. A tradition, where poetry and religion are the same thing, has passed through the centuries, gathering from learned and unlearned metaphor and emotion and carried back again to the multitude.... A whole people, a whole civilization...seems to have been taken up into this imagination and we are moved because we have met our own image...or heard, perhaps for the first time...our voice as in a dream...the cry of the flesh and the cry of the soul seem one." With this inspired song, and indeed, all other eleven songs on this album, we, in profoundest humility, add the cry of the voice to the cries of flesh and soul.

Nóirín Ní Riain—voice, supeti (Indian harmonium) Steve Gorn—bansuri
Jordan Rudess—synth guitar solo Jamey Haddad—djembe, talking drum, shaker Ray Spiegel—tabla,
bayans, duggi tarang, manjira (cymbals) Russ Landau—bass Ira Landgarten—tanpura, ektara

10 DÓNAL ÓG—Young Daniel

'S A Dhónail Óig, má théir thar farraige
Beir mé féin leat is ná dean dearmad.
Beidh agat féirín lá aonaigh 'gus margadh
Agus iníon Rí Gréige mar chéile leapa agat.

Gheall tú domhsa ach rinne tú bréag liom
Go mbeifheá romhamsa ag cró na gcaorach
Rinne me fead agus dhá bhlaoi dhéag dhíom

Ach ní raibh romhamsa ach na huain ag meilli.

Siúd í an Domhnach gur thug mé grá dhuit,
An Domhnach díreach roimh Domhnach Cásca.
'S mé ar mo ghlúine ag léamh na Páise
Ach bhí mo dhá shúil ag síor thabhairt grá dhuit.

Tá mo chroise chomh dubh le háirne
Nó le gual dubh a dh'p i gceartainn
Nó le bonn bróige ar hallai bána
Agus tá lionndubh os cionn mo gháire.

Bhain tú thoir is bhain tú thiar dhíom,
Bhain tú romhamsa is bhain tú i mo dhiaidh mé.
Bhain tú an gealach is bhain tú an grian dhíom
Ach is rí-mhor m'fhaitíos gur bhain tú Dia dhíom.

**O, young Daniel, if you cross the water, take me with you and don't forget, at fair and market day,
I, who am comparable to a Greek King's daughter will be your bed companion.**

**You promised, but you told me a lie, that you would meet me where the sheep are folded.
I called you over and over again, but the only answer was the sheep cry.**

**That was Sunday when I gave you all my love—the Sunday before Easter Sunday.
I was on my knees in church reading the Passion,
but still my two eyes were sending my fierce love to you.**

**My heart is as black as a sloe inside me, or as black shoes imprinted on limewhite halls,
or as the black coals in the smith's forge, and a black cloud of sorrow overhangs my laughter.**

**You've taken East from me, you've taken West from me,
you've taken my future, you've taken my past from me.
You've taken the moon from me, you've taken the sun from me.
But my greatest fear is that you've taken my God from me.**

Every time I sing this song, I can honestly say that another new dimension of feeling opens out for me; of all the women's songs from my tradition, this is by far the most powerful. It goes back to the mid-Eighteenth century in Connemara and the version I have is largely that of Máire Áine Ní

Dhonnachadha, the most wonderful singer ever. The final stanza is one of the finest pieces of poetry to have been created, and as you listen, here are two more of my favourite verses to fill you in a little bit more on this young girl's grief.

O, Dónal Óg, I'd be better for you than a noble lady, who is proud and haughty.
I'd milk the cow and I'd turn the churn for you and if things were difficult, I'd strike a blow for you.

My mother told me not to talk to you today, tomorrow or on Sunday.
But it's too late. It's like locking the door up after the robbery.

Nóirín Ní Riain—voice, shruti box Joanie Madden—tinwhistle Ira Landgarten—tanpura
Paul Winter—bass drum

11 Down By The Sally Gardens

Down by the Sally Gardens, my love and I did meet.
She passed the Sally Gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy as the leaves grow on the tree,
But I, being young and foolish, with her did not agree.

In a field by the river, my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder, she placed her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy as the grass grows on the weirs,
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

I love this song because, despite its seeming simplicity, it has huge life-lessons to tell us, and the words, apparently adapted by William Butler Yeats, speak for themselves. Musically, this is a little piece of magic: three of the four phrases are repeated and all woven around a basic melody of five notes, with which I sometimes could not help interfering!

I can't remember where I heard this song first, but it seems to be ingrained in and inherited by the Irish psyche! I have used this song in workshops all over the world, in many different ways and styles, and I highly recommend giving it a go yourself!

Nóirín Ní Riain—voice Jerry O'Sullivan—uilleann pipes Paul Winter—soprano sax Eugene Friesen—cello Paul Halley—pipe organ, synthesizer Glen Velez—tar (drum), shaker (pods)
Jamey Haddad—snare drums, djembe, goat hooves

12 LÁIRÍN AN GHEARALTAIGH – Fitzgerald's Racehorse

A Ghearaltaigh álainn de shíol na sárfhear,
Ar do ghabhail thar bráid duit do phreab mo chroí,
Cé nár chroith mé lámh leat bhí agam bá leat
Agus guímse an t-ádh leat i bhfad na slí.

An chéad lá steartáladar 's mé im shuí is a' marana
Is nior chuas ar leaba nó gur labhair na héin.
Ach ag coinne le freagra nó le scéala abhaile chugainn
Gurbh i láir an Ghearaltaigh a bhuaigh an 'sway'.

Is moch an mhaidin úd a fuaireas freagra
Go raibh an srian á theannadh léi is a'fásach a béil;
Nach mór an eagla do bhuail an smalaire
Dá gcaillfeadh 'anam na ligfeadh léi!

Tá lá eile chun catha 'gainn is ag Bháltach chun seasamh dúinn
Agus breab ní ghlacfaidh ó aon fhear beo,
Go gcloisfear in Araglain ceol binn a spreagadh dhúinn
Is 'Brown Fanny' ag tarraingt ar an 'winning post'.

Is lom is is min í, is breá é a píb siúd,
Is a dhá cluais direach 'na suí ar a ceann;
Is cosúil le h-éan í ós cionn gach léim díobh
Is i ag tabhairt an 'sway léi that n-ais go teann.

Murach an Bháltach bheith ina drom an lá úd
Ní bheadh rás aige na fáil ar gheall,
Ní ina bonn a cloíodh í-bhí sí luath, mear, briomhar–
Is gura míle fearr í ag an sárfhear modhuil.

**O, lovely Fitzgerald, descended from heroes, as you rode past me, my heart leaped.
Although I never even shook your hand, I loved you dearly and I wish you every success in the race.
That first day they started, I was sitting reflecting, and I didn't go to bed until the birds sang.
All the time, I waited for an answer or news to me that it was Fitzgerald's mare that won the 'sway'.**

It was early in the morning when I heard the news that the bride was tightening and squeezing her mouth. A great fear overtook the rider; if he lost his soul he wouldn't give her her lead!

We will fight another day and the man called Wall standing up for us,
and I will take a bribe from no living man,
until I hear in Araglain the sweetest music inspiring us,
and 'Brown Fanny' approaching the winning post.

She is sleek and gentle, and magnificent is her neck,
and her two ears are jutting straight up from her head.
Before every jump she is like a bird—bringing back the 'sway' with all her power.

Only for Wall being on the winner's back that day, he would not have won the race and the bet.
It wasn't the lack of swiftness, speed and liveliness of her legs that beat her,
and she would be a thousand times better with the gentle master on her back.

Our final presentation is this exquisite melody from County Waterford, bringing to a close the Celtic Soul and Sound revisited. In paying homage to the past, we also honour and salute the future from the very stable, whole and integrated present of the here and now. Anything more, if it is to be said or sung, will surely develop its own wings and fly far beyond the realms of sight and sound. Beannachtái.

Nóirín Ní Riain—voice Jerry O'Sullivan—uilleann pipes Eugene Friesen—cello
Paul Halley—pipe organ Jordan Rudess—synthesizer

Produced by Paul Winter, Russ Landau, and Tom Bates

Recorded by Russ Landau and Tom Bates

Additional recording by Tommy Skarupa

Assistant Engineers: Tommy Skarupa, Katherine Leigh

Mixed by Tom Bates, except **Port Na bPúcaí**, **Baso More**, and **Cucúín**, mixed by Russ Landau

Mastered by Bob Ludwig at Gateway Mastering Studios, Portland, Maine

Recorded and mixed at Living Music Studio, Litchfield, Connecticut, except **Port Na bPúcaí**,
produced and mixed at LMG Studio, Topanga, California

Vocals and pipe organ on **Port Na bPúcaí**, **Cucúín**, and **Láirín An Ghearaltaigh**,
recorded in Mary Keane Chapel, Shaker Village, Enfield, New Hampshire, by Tom Bates

Pipe organ on **Suantraithe**, **Cití Na gCumann**, and **Down By the Sally Gardens**
recorded at Church of Christ, Congregational, Norfolk, Connecticut by Russ Landau

Jordan Rudess plays the Kurzweil K-2000 Synthesizer

All songs traditional, arranged by Paul Winter, except **Port Na bPúcaí**, arranged by Russ Landau;
Cucúín, arranged by Russ Landau and Paul Winter; and **Kay Boshilay**, arranged by Tom Bates and
Jordan Rudess. All arrangements ©1995 Living Earth Music, BMI.

Cover collage, "The Chalice," by American artist Ken Kuhn (1936-1995)

Design by Cynthia Flaxman | Jack* Design

Photograph of "The Chalice," by Jennifer Almquist

Photograph of Nóirín Ní Riain by Colm Henry

For concert bookings or information on the touring schedule of Nóirín Ní Riain,
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It's an easy task this time to know where the priorities of gratitude lie! Were it not for the awe-inspiring, extraordinary person of Paul Winter, his loyal and remarkable vision, his unique, totally gifted talents, not just as saxophone player, but as director and arranger also, this song cluster would never have seen the light of day. Ever since I met Paul and the Consort in Rotterdam some seven years ago now at the astonishing Cathedral there at Pentecost, the relationship, both musically and personally, blossomed immediately, and I have blessed each and every time that we've shared notes, musical and personal, together, from Rio de Janeiro to Costa Rica, from Glenstal Abbey to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. As I've been saying over all these years, Paul, thank you for bringing the best out in me and allowing this poor Celtic soul to fly! To Chez Liley, who sometimes has been daughter to me, sometimes sister, sometimes with the wisdom of mother to me, whom I led down the meadow to meet Paul on their wedding day and whom I observed at the very first meeting of this golden couple in a windswept, rainswept van in Costa Rica, I say thank you also and just as deeply for all the careful, sensitive and gentle scrutiny throughout this opus magnum. You're great, lads!

To the musicians who lend their collective creativity and their own voice to the songs. Being primarily a solo musician, the experience of interacting with others on such a deep level and hearing the ultimate blend of inspiration was totally mind-boggling and humbling. But with such a combination of the most wonderful musicians in the world superimposed on the most wonderful songs in the world, how could one go wrong!

To Christina Andersen, Jim Butler, Kathy Cowles, Kandi Wilkins, Chantal Harris: millions of thanks to the whole Living Music family, and that's just what they've been to me, healing ailments, repairing instrument cases, arranging flights, driving me to airports, the smile of willingness and enthusiasm always to the fore over the years.

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To the creators/composers of these songs to be heard here. Your giftedness and imagination have not gone unnoticed or ignored.

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*"There is but one history
and that is the soul's."
—W.B. Yeats*