

An GRIUÍRE



VOL 9 | 2022



An Cruitire 2022

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Rachel Duffy and Fiona Gryson

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MEMBERSHIP	Family €30 p.a. Individual €20 p.a. Student €10 p.a.

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Eagarfhocal

Editorial

A chairde,

Fáilte chuig *An Cruitire* 2022.



We hope you will enjoy reflecting on another eventful year of harping.

A highlight from the Cairde na Cruite calendar was undoubtedly our annual harp festival, An Chúirt Chruitireachta, which returned home to An Grianán, Termonfeckin this year following two years of virtual programming. Our student concerts at Springtime and Harp Day were a wonderful chance to connect with harpers from across the country, while December saw the welcome return of our Christmas gathering. The harp hire scheme continues to build momentum, as does the Cairde na Cruite committee, who are already active behind the scenes making plans for 2023.

This year's edition of *An Cruitire* takes us on a journey through local, national and international performances and festivals filled with exciting opportunities to share, connect, learn and experience, as well as including important reflections on the more inward-facing and personal elements of the artistic process. Heartfelt thanks to all contributors, to the Cairde na Cruite committee and to Mary Guinan for adding her customary finesse to the newsletter's design.

Thank you for your continued support. Wishing you and yours all the best for 2023.

Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi mhaise dhaobh go léir!

Rachel Duffy and Fiona Gryson
Co-Editors

Message from the Chair

A Chairde,

What a joy to be back in person in 2022 celebrating, sharing and enjoying the rich Irish harp tradition. It was wonderful to meet so many harp players and treasured audience members again during the year at our Spring Concert, Harp Day Concert, Christmas Concert and reception and, the highlight of our public events, our annual residential international harp festival, An Chúirt Chruitireachta.

Heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed to making 2022 a wonderful year for live harp events, to all the Cairde na Cruite committee and especially to Rachel Duffy and Fiona Gryson for all the tireless work in editing *An Cruitire 2022*. Enjoy reading details of all these events and so much more in this edition of *An Cruitire*.

Go mbeadh ceol na cruite i bhúir gcroíthe go deo.
May the music of the harp be in your hearts forever.

Le gach dea ghuí,

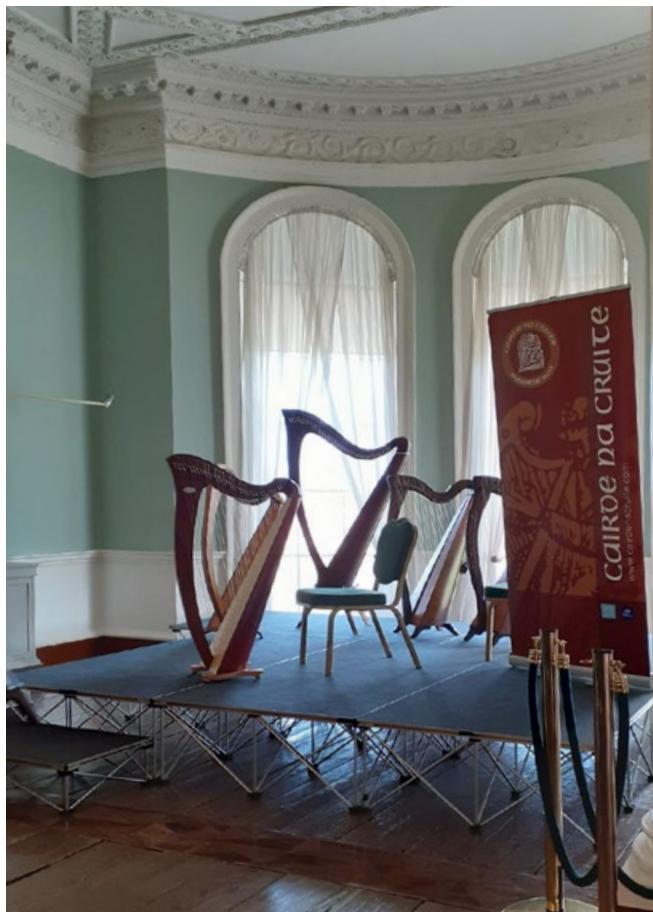
Áine Ní Dhubhghaill, Chair, Cairde na Cruite



Cairde na Cruite Activities

Ceolchoirm an Earraigh | Spring Concert 2022

With some trepidation we planned our first live concert in two years...will there be an audience/players? Wow...full house and no shortage of performers at the historic and beautifully restored Rathfarnham Castle on 27th March 2022.



Rathfarnham Castle, the setting for the Cairde na Cruite Spring Concert

Two years is a long time in the life of a young harp player and it was wonderful to have such an enthusiastic audience supporting these young players, some of whom were making their first public performances.



Fionnuala Donlon, Rathfarnham Castle

Special guest harper Fionnuala Donlon, who was presented with the Seán Ó Riada Gold Medal by President Michael D. Higgins in October 2021, played a superb programme of traditional and newly composed tunes to rapturous applause. Fionnuala's performance was inspirational to all the young players present and captivated the enthusiastic audience in this beautiful venue.

Many thanks to the OPW, Catherine O'Connor and the staff of Rathfarnham Castle. A very special thanks to all performers and committee members Rachel and Helen.

Áine Ní Dhubhghaill, Chair, Cairde na Cruite

An Chúirt Chruitireachta

International Festival for Irish Harp 2022



Séamus Ó Flatharta and Caoimhe Ní Fhlatharta at An Grianán

The 2022 festival, after two years of virtual festivals, marked a welcome return to our residential event. Gently easing back to our in-person festival, a combination of intensive non-residential and residential packages with concerts, workshops and classes was offered to participants.

Concert highlights included Réaltaí Ceoil Chonamara agus Teach Lán le Cruitirí featuring virtuoso harper Séamus Ó Flatharta and sean-nós singer Caoimhe Ní Fhlatharta in a spellbinding performance. Inspirational performances from Festival Mentors featured Máire Ní Chathasaigh, Kathleen Loughnane, Deirdre Ní Bhuachalla, Kim Fleming, Úna Ní Fhlannagáin and Deirdre Granville joined by The Triad Trio.



The Triad Trio with Síofra Ní Dhubhghail, Rachel Duffy and Fiona Gryson

A Feast of Music from East to West featured Alannah Thornburgh and Ryan McAuley



Alannah Thornburgh and Ryan McAuley at An Grianán

combining Appalachian and Irish traditions. Cormac de Barra and Odhrán Ó Casaide combined in a seldom-heard duo drawing on the richness of the Irish tradition, presented in a new and refreshing light while respecting our tradition in a very sensitive and memorable performance.

Participants were treated to an informal outdoor **pop-up concert** by previous festival participant and award-winning harper Emer Ní Scolaí on the opening day.

Reaching out to the wider community has always been important to us and this year, it was a pleasure to host some lunchtime concerts at the Tholsel in Drogheda with stunning performances including **Rising Stars of the Harp from Louth and Beyond** with harpers Fionnuala Donlon, Rachael Dooley and Hannah Nic Eindri.

Audiences were enthralled with our **Younger Stars of the Irish Harp** from Oisín Murphy, Jaymee, Ryan and Kayla Martin performing contemporary as well as traditional tunes and arrangements to the delight of all.

While what I have mentioned above is a synopsis of our 2022 festival, what happens throughout the festival week has been a very special experience for many harp players over many years. Cairde na Cruite was delighted to host a reception during the festival to honour and thank previous festival director Aibhlín McCrann who has led, supported and was inspirational in promoting the festival for many years.



Emer Ní Scolaí at An Grianán

Áine Ní Dhubhghaill
Chair, Cairde na Cruite



Jaymee, Ryan and Kayla Martin with Oisín Murphy – Lunchtime concert at The Tholsel, Drogheda

Ceolchoirm an Gheimhrídh | Winter Concert 2022

On a cold and crisp Sunday afternoon harpers and audience were warmly welcomed around the roaring fire at Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann's headquarters, Cultúrlann na hÉireann in Monkstown, Co. Dublin on 4th December 2022.

A captivating and diverse programme was presented by young and more experienced students. Performances on Irish harp included jigs, reels, slow airs, song to own harp accompaniment, contemporary compositions and a performance on pedal harp of *A Minstrel's Adieu to His Native Land* by John Thomas.

Apart from solo performances, the audience also had the pleasure of hearing ensemble music from two talented family groups, the McNamara sisters

and, finishing the concert, the Martin family who also played at a lunchtime concert in our 2022 Cúirt Chruitireachta Festival.

Congratulations to all performers: Roise Ní Laoighre, Saorlaith Ó Melia, Roisín McNamara, Áine McNamara, Anna Maria Arrar Ivan Roncea, Hannah Hendry and Jaymee, Ryan and Kayla Martin.

Sincere thanks to all teachers who nominated these talented students to perform, to the parents and to Pat in Comhaltas who kept the fire stoked and made sure we were all comfortable for the afternoon. Much appreciation to our dedicated committee members Rachel, Mary and Fiona who helped in the planning and served seasonal



L to R: Ryan, Kayla and Jaymee Martin performing at the Cairde na Cruite Winter concert

refreshments including mulled wine, mince pies and treats. A spontaneous delivery of chicken nuggets and chips from a parent's local business (WS Burgers & Wings) was a very welcome surprise and set all up for the journey back to many parts of Leinster and Ulster.

Go mbeirimíd beo ar an am seo arís!

Áine Ní Dhubhghaill
Chair



Saorlaith Ó Melia at the
Cairde na Cruite Winter
Concert

Roisín McNamara and Áine McNamara performing at the
Cairde na Cruite Winter Concert

An Chúirt Chruitireachta 2023

Planning is currently underway for our next harp festival, which will be held in An Grianán, Termonfeckin from 25-30 June 2023. Stay tuned on our [website](#) and social media for updates.

Instagram: [cairde_na_cruite](#) | Facebook: [Cairde Na Cruite](#) | Twitter: [@CCIHF](#)



An Chúirt Chruitireachta International Festival *for* Irish Harp

Sunday 25th to
Friday 30th June 2023

An Grianán, Termonfechin,
Co Louth



funding
festivals



Scéim Ligin Cruite

The Cairde na Cruite harp hire scheme continued to be very popular in 2022. There is a high demand for rental harps in Ireland so we would once again like to encourage you to consider donating or loaning a harp to Cairde na Cruite. We would insure the harp and make sure that your harp would give an aspiring harp player the opportunity to learn this wonderful instrument. Donations of harps will also be gratefully received and acknowledged.

Please contact Áine at cairdenacruite@gmail.com with any enquiries. Prospective harpers can find information about how to rent a harp [here](#).

Fiona Gryson



Harp Donation to Cairde na Cruite

Alice Foy-Duffy, a harp player who attended An Chúirt Chruitireachta numerous times with friends Rosemary and Dolores, is fondly remembered by many for her warm personality and infectious enthusiasm for the harp. Contributing much joy and hilarity to our evening sessions,



we affectionately christened these ladies ‘The Bunratty Chicks’.

Sadly, after being unwell for some time, Alice passed away from Covid-19. Her husband Peter Duffy has kindly donated her beautiful Dusty Strings harp this year to Cairde na Cruite and it is now included in our harp rental scheme. We hope that aspiring harp players will benefit from this kind donation. May the spirit of Alice live on through this beautiful instrument.

Sincere and heartfelt thanks to Peter for his generous donation.

Áine Ní Dhubhghaill

Cairde na Cruite Lá na Cruite | Harp Day Concert



L to R: Helen Taaffe Richardson, Ruth O'Hara, Gráinne Ní Fhrighil at the Cairde na Cruite Concert for Lá na Cruite | Harp Day

Between thunder and lightning showers on a busy Lá na Cruite | Harp Day afternoon, young harp players flocked to the beautiful Pearse Museum on Saturday 15th October for a captivating and diverse concert.

After a two-year break from live concerts, the staff of the Pearse Museum warmly welcomed us back to this historical venue where Irish harp was taught over 100 years ago. Young Irish harp players, Jane Sun, Saoirse Pu and Muireann Ní Mhuirthile performed both classical and traditional Irish harp music with outstanding enthusiasm and musicality.

Arrangements performed by a trio from the RIAM (Ruth O'Hara, Gráinne Ní Fhrighil and Helen Taaffe Richardson) included newly composed 'New Beginnings' by Ruth O'Hara who

also performed 'Moon River' on pedal harp.

Multi-award-winning special guest Emer Ní Scolaí captivated the audience with magical and spellbinding brilliance. A very special moment was Emer's tribute to her grandfather Séamus MacMathúna, a seminal figure in Irish music who passed away this year and who had been present here at previous concerts.

Many thanks to all the staff and Catherine O'Connor at the Pearse Museum for their generous support of Cairde na Cruite for so many years and to all the performers and audience members. We look forward to further Spring and Autumn concerts in 2023.

Áine Ní Dhubhghaill

Highlights from the Harping Calendar

Lá na Cruite | Harp Day

Saturday 15th October 2022

Lá na Cruite | Harp Day 2022 took place on Saturday, October 15th in person and online all over the world. For the sixth year in a row, Irish harpers extended a warm invitation to harpers

everywhere to join with them in celebrating our 1000-year-old Irish harping tradition, which is recognised on UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Our purpose on Lá na Cruite





Aisling Ennis and artist Juliette Viodé collaborated on a street art project for Harp Day

| Harp Day is to promote the harp in Ireland and internationally among as many performers and to a diversity of audiences on one day in the year.

Our narrative for 2022 was **Harps Together** where we shone a spotlight on harp music's special ability to unite cultures and celebrate differences. **Harps Together** featured harps sounding loudly from dawn to dusk in iconic locations throughout Ireland, north and south and from as far away as Sydney, across the US, Asia and various European countries. This year also marked the 230th anniversary of the 1792 Belfast Harpers' Assembly, and many of the events planned for Lá na Cruite | Harp Day drew their inspiration from Edward Bunting's invaluable legacy.

Funded by An Chomhairle Ealaíon, the Arts Council, the context of Lá na Cruite | Harp Day

is firmly set within the CÉHI vision, mission and strategic priorities, where we ensure that as many artists (mainly harpers) as possible are supported to bring harp music to as many people as possible. We made this event available and accessible to all by offering the online content free to watch; most of the in-person events were free too. This year, through our exciting collaborations, we involved other musicians and employed visual artists, storytellers, videographers and sound engineers, who work in the arts sector.

Lá na Cruite | Harp Day 2022 saw the return of live events in both indoor and outdoor venues, with 63 individual events taking place across 20 counties, organised by our community of passionate and energetic harpers and harp-lovers around Ireland and beyond.



Harp Day at glór theatre, Ennis Dale McKay (handpan) and Aisling Lyons (harp)

We also presented a number of ticketed events which were coordinated and produced by Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland. These included our Gala Concert in Liberty Hall Theatre, a Lecture/Recital on Edward Bunting with Dr Mary Louise O'Donnell and Dr Teresa O'Donnell at the National Library of Ireland; Labhraidh Loingseach: Musical Storytelling Sessions and pop-up harp events at Russborough House;

Séamus Ó Flatharta, Aisling Ennis and Aileen Kennedy with the Wexford Harp Ensemble at St. Iberius Church, Wexford, and a Celebration of Harping in glór, Ennis on the eve of Lá na Cruite | Harp Day with Aisling Lyons (harp), Dale McKay (handpan), Elaine Hogan (harp), Sheila Garry (fiddle) with Music Generation Clare and Laois performing in their first collaboration. Our Gala Liberty Hall concert challenged the



Harp Day Gala Concert at Liberty Hall, Dublin with the Friel Sisters, Zoe Conway, John McIntyre and Cormac de Barra

ingenuity of our great backstage team, and was a particularly momentous occasion, as we welcomed more than 50 members of Music Generation Laois, Mayo and Louth Harp Ensembles, led by composer Michael Rooney and their teachers, Siobhan Buckley, Gráinne Hambly and Deirdre Ní Bhuaichalla. Northern harper Lauren Ní Néill and Eugene McLoughlin performed a rousing harp and fiddle duo, while Eibhlis Ní Riordáin captivated the audience with her early Irish harp and song. We owe a very special thanks to Zoe Conway, John McIntyre, the Friel Sisters and Cathal Ó Curráin who at impossibly short notice, joined the redoubtable harper, Cormac De Barra on stage for the concert's second half when Moya Brennan and her band were unable to perform. Our deepest condolences to Moya and her family on their sad loss.

Due to popular demand, we decided to feature our Harpers' Call initiative again in 2022. We further developed the concept this year by presenting the 150+ videos submitted on an interactive map online platform: <https://www.harpireland.ie/interactive-map>. In total, 336 harpers performed as part of our online programme on Harp Day, with our video performances achieving 5,192 total views on YouTube, 1,466 views of the videos on the Interactive Map. Our Harp Day related posts

achieved more than 160,000 impressions across Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Our thanks to Stefano Odorico and Catriona Cannon for their invaluable help with this innovative initiative.



The Wexford Harp Ensemble with Aileen Kennedy, Aisling Ennis and Séamus Ó Flatharta



Gráinne Hambly and the Music Generation Mayo Harp Ensemble at Foxford Woollen Mills, Westport

Partnerships are key to extending our reach on Harp Day, and this year we established a number of new strategic partnerships, while also building on our valued existing partnerships. These included: West Wicklow Chamber Music

Festival, Wicklow County Arts Office, Russborough House, glór in Ennis, RTÉ Supporting the Arts, RTÉ lyric fm, Kilkenny Design, Living Canvas, Tyneside Festival and Cumann Cultúrtha Mhic Reachtain. Our partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs also continued, and the DFA shared our digital postcard video widely through their global



Anne Marie O'Farrell and students perform for Harp Day at RNCM Manchester network of consulates. Watch our digital postcard:

<https://youtu.be/o0KwPaFJH5E>, where harper Aisling Ennis and artist Juliette Viodé collaborated on a street art project eliciting Juliette's response to the harp with a dramatic palette of colour in an eye-catching mural, which brought a group of German tourists to a halt on the banks of the canal to view the work and to listen to Aisling's lively harping.

Lá na Cruite | Harp Day would not happen were it not for the dedication and enthusiasm of harpers country-wide, and all over the world. This was matched by the tireless work of Muireann Sheahan, our 2022 programme coordinator, our designer Mary Guinan and social media guru Sine Kenny. Our thanks to the CÉHI Advisory Group, our ensemble directors, harp teachers and others, who helped coordinate the day's events and to all the harpers who turned

out on the day - you epitomise our living harping tradition. Go mbeirimid beo ar an am seo arís.

A complete listing of all Lá na Cruite | Harp Day 2022 events can be viewed at <https://www.harpireland.ie/la-na-cruite-harp-day-2022/>.

Aibhlín McCrann
CathaoirleachCruit Éireann, Harp Ireland



Cairde na Cruite harpers at the Pearse Museum on Harp Day



Rachel Duffy & Bray CCÉ Harp Ensemble at Harp Day in Russborough House, Co. Wicklow

Blas International Summer School of Irish Traditional Music and Dance

The 26th Blas International Summer School of Irish Traditional Music and Dance was held to great success in the Irish World Academy from **20th June to 1st July**. Blas, directed by Pamela Cotter, has firmly established itself as one of Ireland's most prestigious summer programmes, drawing students from all over the world to spend two weeks gaining access to the expertise of some of Ireland's finest artists.



Cormac de Barra, Tara Breen, and Conor Crimmins during a Blas 2022 lunchtime concert

The Summer School was officially launched by Professor Kerstin Mey, President of the University of Limerick. Students attending the course benefitted from the wisdom and tutelage of eminent figures of the traditional world such as Dónal Lunny, Cormac de Barra, John Carty, Siobhán Peoples, Tara Breen, Aisling Lyons, Tom Doorley, Sandra Joyce, Tommy Hayes, and Colin Dunne, to name but a few.

In addition to tuition and masterclasses, Blas students experienced a whole range of activities including daily academic lectures on Irish traditional music and dance topics, Irish language classes, nightly music sessions, céilíthe, and field trips to the Cliffs of Moher and Aillwee Caves.

The Blas series of public events were also immensely popular this year. In addition to



Cormac de Barra at Blas 2022

daily lunchtime concerts featuring Blas tutors, two evening concerts were held: **Maighréad** and **Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill** on Wednesday 22nd June in the Irish World Academy and **Goitse** on Thursday 30th in Dolans Warehouse. Blas was also delighted to have Irish harper **Cormac de Barra** as

the guest for the annual Blas Bilingual Interview conducted by RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta's Áine Hensey. Cormac is a third-generation harper who has made numerous recordings and toured the world as both a solo musician and with renowned groups such as Clannad, Dervish, and Altan. In addition to participating in the Bilingual Interview, Cormac performed in the public lunchtime concert series and gave masterclasses to Blas students. The harp students this year came from Ireland, the Netherlands, and the USA.

Preparations for Blas 2023 are already underway with the dates confirmed for **19th to 30th June**. For further information on all aspects of the Blas Summer School, visit www.blas.ie.

Pamela Cotter, Director
Blas International Summer School of Irish Traditional Music and Dance

Photos: Maurice Gunning

Harp at Scoil Samhradh Willie Clancy 2022

The harp classes at the Willie Clancy summer school / Scoil Samhradh Willie Clancy, now in its 15th year, continues to attract a diverse crowd of student musicians from all parts of the world. However, SSWC 2022 attracted a greater number of students from all parts of Ireland, as perhaps the legacy of travel concerns, post Covid, was a factor in less international students travelling.

Gráinne Hambly had to bow out this year and was replaced by Úna Ní Fhlannagáin. The remaining dedicated and terrific team was composed of Máire Ní Chathasaigh, Laoise Kelly, Cormac de Barra, Paul Dooley and Kathleen Loughnane. Laoise

had an important concert in Dublin Castle on the Friday and Deirdre Granville kindly stepped in for the Saturday morning class.

Harping has flourished at SSWC and year on year the harp concert, showcasing the work of teachers and some very talented harpers, young and not so young, once again drew a full attendance for the Monday annual concert. A guest performance from a remarkable musician, Kseniya Rusnack on bandura, a harp from her native Ukraine, now living in Lisdoonvarna, brought a most musical and exotic interlude to the evening.



Paul Dooley (early Irish harp) and Kseniya Rusnack, Ukrainian musician on bandura

She performed a piece with Paul Dooley followed by a Ukrainian set of tunes to the delight and appreciation of the audience. I invited her to play the following day for the more advanced students and again she was listened to with complete attention and fascination, a truly musical and highly skilled young woman.

One of the afternoon recitals/lectures was “Welsh medieval Harp Music in parallel with Irish Music traditions” presented by Dr Paul Dooley, a leading exponent of the metal strung harp and Ceri Owen Jones, a Welsh harper and researcher in Medieval Welsh music. Between the two eloquent speakers, we were introduced to the distinctive sound of the metal strung harp and its historical context.

The Willie Clancy Summer school continues to be inspired by the legacy of Willie Clancy who

died in 1973. It is a joyous festival of music, friendships and for many years, it continues to provide sustenance to the best of our traditional musicians, a setting for a display of their gifts, for interaction with their peers and for transmission of their knowledge and love of their tradition.

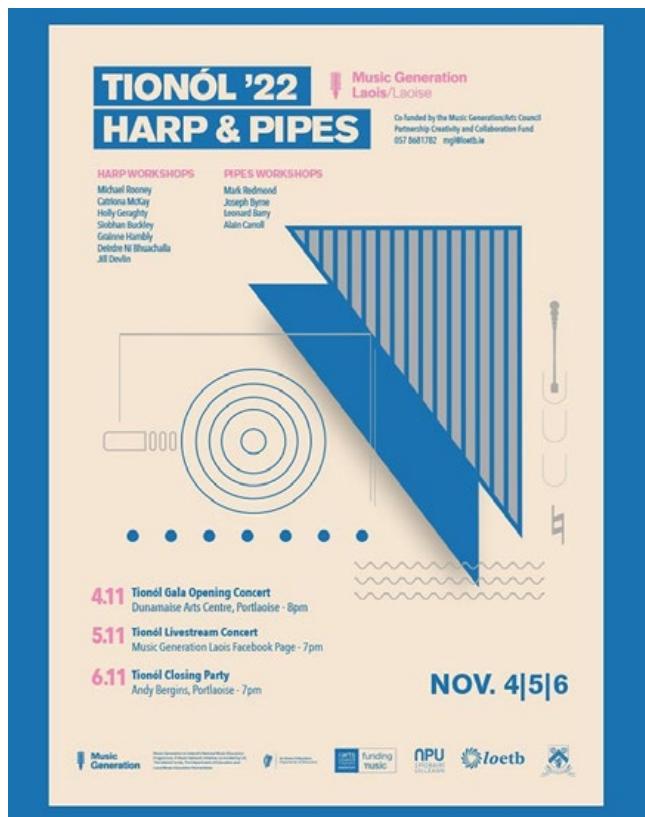
To tell a story in sound and to move people, it happens in surprising, unexpected moments. We are fortunate to have a generation of harpers who are approaching the music from their playing of other traditional instruments, thoroughly schooled in the nuance and rhythms of Irish traditional music.

Harping has flourished at SSWC and we look forward to SSWC 2023, a light-filled, important date in our diary.

Kathleen Loughnane

Tionól Harps and Pipes '22

A unique festival of workshops and performances for harpers and pipers, created and presented by Music Generation Laois took place in Portlaoise on the 4th, 5th and 6th of November.



Over 100 young musicians took part in Tionól (gathering), travelling from all over Ireland to participate.

The festival line-up, which is the only harp and pipe festival in the world, included workshops with well-known harpers Michael Rooney, Catriona McKay, Holly Geraghty, Siobhán Buckley, Gráinne Hambly, Deirdre Ní Bhuachalla and Jill Devlin as well as uilleann pipe workshops for beginners through to advanced students with Mark Redmond, Joseph Byrne, Leonard Barry and Alain Carroll. Three fantastic concerts took place over the course of Tionól. On Friday 4 November,

the Tionól Opening Gala Concert took place in the Dunamaise Arts Centre. This concert featured the premiere of new music composed by Áine McGeeney (Goitse) and performed by the Music Generation Laois Trad Orchestra as well as a performance of 'Cláirseoireacht' by the Music Generation Harp Collective and Michael Rooney. On Saturday night the 5th November, young harpers and pipers from all over Ireland performed music developed with the Scottish Harper Catriona McKay and Wexford Piper Mark Redmond – this performance was streamed live from The Malt House in Stradbally on the Music Generation Laois Facebook page and is still available to view [here](#). The annual Tionól Closing Party took place in Bergin's Bar, Portlaoise with the fantastic Scottish duo Catriona McKay (harp) and Chris Stout (fiddle), joined by Piper Leonard Barry.

Tionól is co-funded by the Music Generation/Arts Council Partnership Creativity and Collaboration Fund. Music Generation Laois is part of Music Generation, Ireland's National Music Education Programme, co-funded by U2, the Ireland Funds and the Department of Education. Locally, Music Generation Laois is part of Laois Offaly Education and Training Board (lead partner) and supported by Laois County Council.

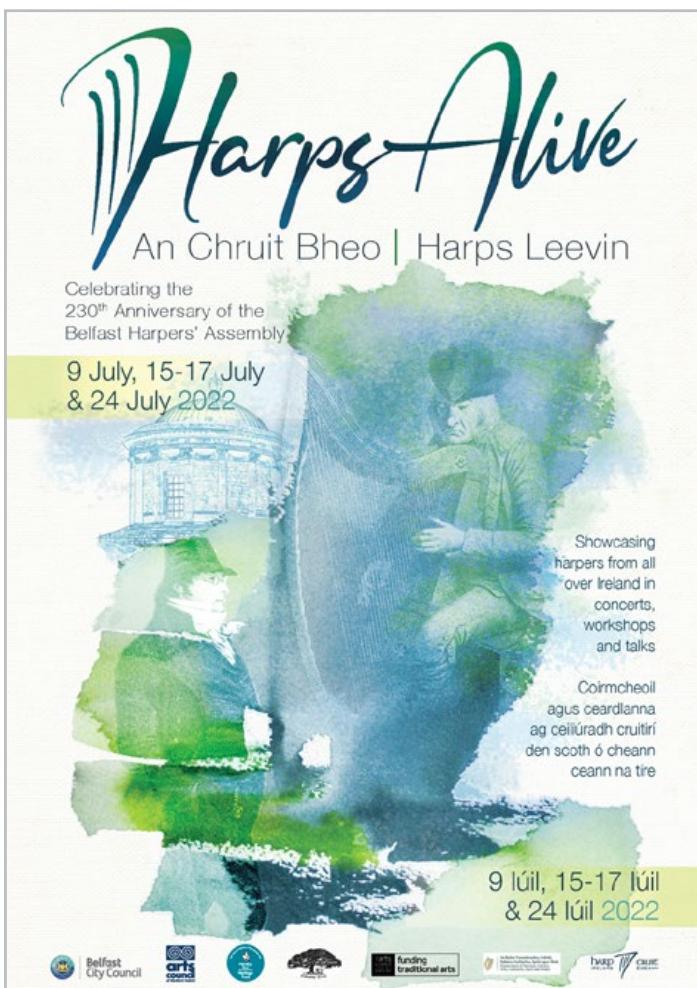
Rosa Flannery
Music Development Officer
Music Generation Laois

Harps Alive

An Chruit Bheo | Harps Leevin

Belfast July 9th, 16th, 17th 2022 | Dublin 24th July 2022

Cruit Éireann|Harp Ireland and the Belfast organisation, Reclaim the Enlightenment presented a major collaborative festival in July 2022 to mark the 230th anniversary of the assembly of harpers in Belfast in 1792 and to celebrate the work of the renowned organist and collector, Edward Bunting, who played such an important part in the preservation of their music.



Mark Doherty, Niall Comer, Stephen McCracken, Aoibheann Devlin, Aibhlín McCrann and Nodlaig Brolly at St Aidan's

The historical significance of the 1792 Belfast Harpers' Assembly is not to be underestimated. It was led by the upper echelon of cultural leadership in Belfast, who united to stimulate public interest in what they deemed to be a tradition at risk. Its purpose was to revive an interest in harp music and to collect the music of the harpers and note their style of playing for future generations.



Aibhlín McCrann introducing harpers at Mussenden Temple

Harps Alive | An Chruit Bheo | Harps Leevin brought together harpers from all over Ireland to assess Edward Bunting's legacy, showcase the harpers' music, and bring a contemporary spotlight to bear on current developments to safeguard harping as a living tradition in Ireland.

A prelude to the main programme was a lecture by Mark Doherty and Fiona Pegrum with harp performances from Causeway Harps and Scoil Ruaidhrí Dhall harp ensembles celebrating the



L to R: John Gray (Reclaim the Enlightenment), Aibhlín McCrann (CÉHI), Minister Catherine Martin TD, Tomás MacUilleagóid (Eala Harps), Stephen McCracken and (front) Áine Ní Dhubhghaill, at the commemoration at Edward Bunting's graveside, Mount Jerome

life and music of Denis Hempson in Mussenden Temple on the north coast on the weekend of 9-10 July.

Following the Festival launch by Tina Black, Lord Mayor of Belfast on July 15th with an opening concert, workshops, talks, Citizen's Manifesto at the Belfast Assembly Rooms and two major concerts in Belfast on July 16th and 17th, events concluded in Dublin on Sunday, July 24th with a lecture from Dr Mary-Louise O'Donnell on Bunting's Dublin years with Teresa O'Donnell on harp.



Teresa and Mary Louise O'Donnell at 'Edward Bunting: The Dublin Connection' in Rathfarnham Castle

A wreath was laid at the newly restored grave of Edward Bunting in Mount Jerome by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in acknowledgement of Bunting's key role as a significant collector, transcriber of the music played in 1792 and conserver of the harping tradition.

Our thanks to the Minister for attending and speaking so graciously at the graveside. Events in Belfast and Dublin were also attended by Anthony Bunting, a descendant of Bunting's brother who



Frank Bunting, Aibhlín McCrann (CÉHI), Tina Black (Lord Mayor of Belfast) and John Gray (Reclaim the Enlightenment)

has done extensive research into the Bunting family history, and who very generously shared his

regenerated areas.

Harpers and performers were drawn from all over Ireland and featured key exponents of the early harp and contemporary Irish harp traditions focusing on all aspects of the Bunting legacy. Two highlights included a recreation of the Harpers' Assembly featuring 13 young harpers, north and south recreating the actual harpers' assembly and performing their interpretations of what was



Cormac de Barra at An Cultúrlann, Belfast

research and findings in both places.

In order to create broader access to the music, certain events were held in Belfast's inner city, e.g., St Joseph's in Sailortown, An Chultúrlann, Turas, Duncairn, Shankhill Road Library and in other



Lauren O'Neill and Eugene McKenna at the Deer Head, Belfast



Emily Cullen, Aisling Lyons, Aisling Urwin, Niamh O'Brien, Ciara Taaffe, Adam O'Neill, Gráinne Meyer, Luke Webb, Fiona Gryson, Rachel Duffy, Siobhan Buckley, Sharon Carroll, Alannah Thornburgh at the 230 Years a-Harping, First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast

played in 1792. They were joined by poet, Emily Cullen who performed poems she has composed in the voices of the original harpers.

We also celebrated the contribution of the cross community, Belfast Harp Orchestra established in 1992, in our gala concert where 5 members of the former orchestra, directed by their founder, Dr

Janet Harbison, presented a varied programme. The impact of this initiative in Northern Ireland has left an important legacy in the numbers of harpers now playing harp across the north and who are passing their skills to a new generation of harpers.

Partners were key organisations contributing to



Janet Harbison, Mary Louise and Teresa O'Donnell, Aileen Kennedy, Kathryn & Susannah Weir at the Harps Alive Gala Finale Concert St. Joseph's Sailortown, commemorating the Belfast Ulster Orchestra



Siobhán Armstrong and Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde at the 230 Years a-Harping, First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast



Below: Northern Stars – Adam O'Neill, Ciara Taaffe and Gráinne Meyer – at the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast

programming, project management, financial management, coordination and the provision of key venues. They included Reclaim the Enlightenment, Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland, St Joseph's Sailortown, Turas, Comhaltas Uladh / Conradh na Gaeilge, National Trust, Limavady Area Ancestry, Clifton House, Trasna na Tíre/ Limavady Area Ancestry, and United Irish Society, First Presbyterian Church Rosemary Street, An Chultúrlann, Linen Hall Library, and Queen's



Brian Waugh (Turmennan Harps) at Shankill Road Library



Gráinne Meyer, Luke Webb, Fiona Gryson, Sharon Carroll, Rachel Duffy, Siobhán Buckley at the 230 Years a-Harping, First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast



Laoise Kelly at the launch of Harps Alive at the Linen Hall Library



Simon Chadwick & Sylvia Crawford workshop at Clifton House

University, Belfast.

This was a first for all concerned and there was a wonderful spirit of collaboration, connectivity and kinship with the common goal of celebrating the harp tradition on an all-island basis. Our thanks to our funders, north and south, who made it possible.

Aibhlín McCrann
Cathaoirleach,
Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland



Kathleen Loughnane at the Harps Alive Gala Finale Concert St. Joseph's Sailortown, commemorating the Belfast Ulster Orchestra



Áine Ní Dhubhghaill, at the commemoration at Edward Bunting's graveside, Mount Jerome



Paul Dooley at Edward Bunting's graveside, Mount Jerome

Music Generation Harp Collective's Journey

The Music Generation Harp Collective was formed in November 2019 when ensembles from Music Generation Laois, Music Generation Louth and Music Generation Mayo were awarded the opportunity to perform at the World Harp Congress in Wales in July 2020.



The Harp Collective with Gráinne Hambly, Deirdre Ní Bhuaichalla, Michael Rooney and Siobhan Buckley in Cardiff

The idea of a collaboration was sparked at Tionól 2018, the world's only festival for Harp and Pipes, between the directors of the three ensembles Siobhan Buckley, Gráinne Hambly, William Jackson and myself, Deirdre Ní Bhuaichalla. Our initial ideas came together following a collaborative performance for Harp Ireland on RTÉ's Ray D'Arcy Saturday night show aired for Lá na Cruite 2018.

We were all keen to work on something else together so the potential for a collaboration for the upcoming World Harp Congress in Cardiff was a perfect fit. Following word of a successful application to perform, a callout for composers began to commence the composition of a suite of new music to chronicle harping in Ireland. Michael Rooney was appointed as the composer and the project progressed from there.

With the onset of the pandemic in the spring of 2020, it became clear very quickly that the World Harp Congress would be impacted. The team decided that work would still begin on the music that had been composed by Michael. Determined to keep up momentum in the interim and to keep making music from home, the young harpers and our mentor team came together virtually. Throughout ongoing restrictions and lock-downs, the Harp Collective ensembles met regularly via Zoom to rehearse, play and create. The young musicians even staged their own epic virtual performance of ‘Elizabeth Kelly’s Favourite’, arranged by Gráinne Hambly and William Jackson.

Fast forward to Tionól 2021 in Portlaoise, where the three ensembles along with their directors met together for the first time to play through two of the four movements. This was a momentous

occasion with sixty harpers in the room, it was finally coming together!

In the spring of 2022, the opportunity arose to premiere the suite at the St. Patrick’s Festival main stage at Collins Barracks in Dublin. Rehearsals began immediately with young harpers travelling to rehearse in venues across Louth, Mayo and Laois. As part of their final rehearsal before the performance, the young musicians met in Carlingford, Co. Louth and enjoyed some team building and water sports, winding down ahead of the big event! On Saturday 19th of March, at St. Patrick’s Festival Collins Barracks, the Harp Collective were delighted to premiere the first performance *Cláirseoiracht* to a national and international audience as part of Music Generation’s event Summoning a Harp Revival.





The Harp Collective with Michael Rooney performing at the Harp Day Gala Concert at Liberty Hall in October

Next up for The Harp Collective was their much anticipated trip to Cardiff for the World Harp Congress 2022, originally scheduled for July 2020. There was fierce excitement when the 42 young harpers hit the road in July. Buses, boats, aeroplanes and vans filled with harps eventually arrived in Cardiff in time for some much needed sleep. Day one was spent rehearsing together with Michael for the performance scheduled the following day. The young harpers also spent several hours perusing the congress exhibition area, trying out all sorts of harps, big and small, electric and acoustic. The exhibition certainly opened their eyes up to lots of new musical possibilities. Pop-up performances were enthusiastically attended also. A number of senior members attended an inspiring Latin American style sound effects workshop with legend Alfredo Rolando Ortiz.

The three individual ensembles performed on Wednesday afternoon followed by the long awaited performance by the collective (See link below). It wasn't all work and no play either, some shopping, a cinema trip and a post-performance party kept everyone busy along with some fabulous eateries. Cardiff City was a big hit with the Collective. Where to next I wonder?

Cláirseoiríreacht, composed by Michael Rooney and commissioned by Music Generation for the Harp Collective, comprises four movements. The first movement is based on a Clan March, and aptly named 'Teitheamh na nIarlaí' (The Flight of the Earls) to represent that period in Irish history that had an immense effect on the bardic system and the harpers. Movement Two represents the era of Carolan and the Connellans, the nomadic harpers

who have carved themselves into the musical history of our nation and indeed the world. It takes the form of a Planxty, 'Planxty Leslie', named for Castle Leslie which is located near Michael's childhood home in Co. Monaghan. 'Suanrai' (Lullaby), consisting of two tunes, makes up the third movement. This movement represents the period in the mid-20th century, when following a period of great decline, a number of ladies including the Ní Shé sisters, Mercedes Bolger, Gráinne Yeats and Sheila Larchet-Cuthbert began to forge a new path for harping in Ireland. This movement is influenced by and dedicated to all those who inspired a new generation of harping to whom we owe so much. The final movement, 'Suairceas' (Joy), represents the here-and-now and the huge resurgence in harp playing that has come about through the work of organisations like Cairde na Cruite, Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and Music Generation both nationally and internationally. It is in the form of a three-part reel with a modern twist.

To date *Cláirseoireacht*, has been performed by the Harp Collective at the St. Patrick's Festival, Dublin, World Harp Congress, Cardiff, Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Mullingar, Harp Ireland's Harping Together Gala Concert, Liberty Hall and Tionól for Harp and Pipes 2022. We are delighted at the reception it has received.

What's next for the Harp Collective? We are delighted to announce that the Music Generation Waterford Senior Harp Ensemble is joining the Harp Collective moving forward. It is great to be adding to the ranks and expanding the reach and scope of The Harp Collective for 2023 and 2024. If you are interested in getting involved or just interested in following our story, keep an eye on the social media pages both nationally and in

any of the Music Generation areas involved.

Special thanks must be extended to all who have helped with this project in Music Generation Laois, Music Generation Louth and Music Generation Mayo. We are also grateful to the National Development Office of Music Generation for their ongoing support as well. A special mention must go to Rosa Flannery, of Music Generation Laois, who administered the project on behalf of the three areas.

About the Harp Collective

Cláirseoireacht was funded through the Creativity and Collaboration Fund which is co-funded by Music Generation/Arts Council and the Department of Education. The collective is led by ensemble directors Siobhan Buckley (Laois), Gráinne Hambly and William Jackson (Mayo) and Deirdre Ní Bhuaichalla (Louth).

Cláirseoireacht is available to purchase from Draíocht Music: <https://www.draiochtmusic.com/store/clairseoireacht>

Performance of Movt. 1:

Teitheamh na nIarlaí from WHC Cardiff 2022:
<https://youtu.be/A46TsHF5N2g>

Music Generation Laois Harp Ensemble:
<https://youtu.be/rA-WVdtuDX0>

Music Generation Louth Harp Ensemble:
<https://youtu.be/KPgJYhrrA78>

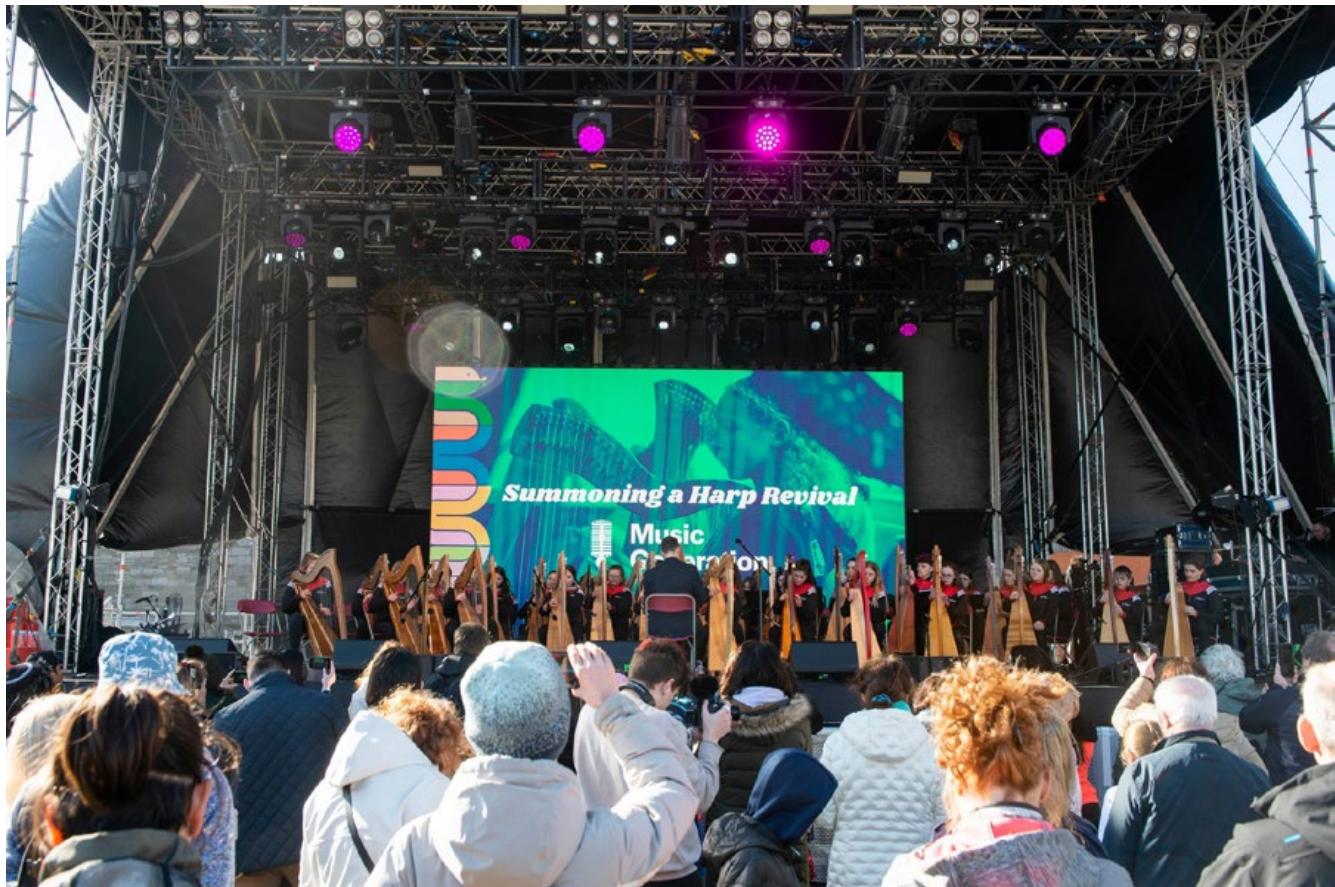
Music Generation Mayo Harp Ensemble:
https://youtu.be/-1_qeG8bAjQ

Deirdre Ní Bhuaichalla

Music Generation

Summoning a Harp Revival

at St Patrick's Festival 2022



Meet the young musicians

One hundred and eighty-one Music Generation young musicians took to the stage on a sunny March weekend to showcase their take on traditional Irish music to an international audience at St. Patrick's Festival 2022. These musicians, hailing from counties including Laois, Mayo, Louth and Cork, united to share new music and produce a programme to celebrate Ireland's national emblem – The Harp. Amongst the performers were harpists, concertina players, fiddle players, bodhrán players, and even a dancing troupe of hip-hop/rap artists

from North Cork City. In addition to making the trek to the big smoke to celebrate our national festival, these musicians had one thing in common, the drive to get back on stage after two challenging years of online rehearsals and virtual lessons.

The opportunity to collaborate with Ireland's national festival sparked from The Harp Collective's vision to premiere new works from prolific Sligo composer Michael Rooney to a national and international audience. The collective, joined by [Laois Trad Orchestra](#), [Nós Nua](#), and



The Harp Collective with Mohsen Amini

[Music Generation Cork City](#)'s The Kabin, created a meaningful and energetic programme which absolutely wowed the audience at Collins Barracks.

The Harp Collective is a cross-county initiative made up of 52 young musicians aged 10-17, from [Music Generation Mayo](#), [Music Generation Louth](#) and [Music Generation Laois](#). This once-in-a-lifetime performance opportunity had been long-awaited by these young musicians. The harpers had previously secured a performance opportunity to premier this new music at the [World Harp Congress](#), Wales in July 2020. With the performance postponed until July 2022, the young musicians were delighted to finally showcase their efforts and to return to rehearsing together 'in-person' after two years of maintaining momentum and keeping the music alive.

We took a moment to meet some of the young harpers who brought this magical moment together! Young musicians Zoe (17) and Grace (15) from Music Generation Louth shared the highs and lows of rehearsals, how they discovered the harp and what music really means to their identity.

Meet Zoe and Grace

Zoe, a member of Nós Nua and The Harp Collective and Grace, a member of Senior Strings and The

Harp Ensemble both began playing harp and violin at age 7 with Zoe describing her initial harp lessons with Deirdre Ní Bhuaichalla as 'a dream come true'.

On her first memory of choosing the harp Zoe said:

"I saw it somewhere when I was six, I can't remember where, but I've always had such a fascination for how it's played and the look of it. About a month or two before I started, I went to a concert in the National Concert Hall and I saw the harp again and I thought I really wanna play that!"

Grace noted

'I saw it on TV and I didn't even know the name of it! I said to my mam – I want to play the thing that you move your fingers along to. Mam didn't know how to get me into it but she found Deirdre, enrolled me into lessons with her and I've been playing it since.'

Zoe and Grace were initially able to access a harp to learn and practise on via Music Generation Louth's renting process without which they both confirmed they would not have had access to such a valuable instrument. The girls began rehearsing with The Harp Collective and Michael Rooney in 2020 and were delighted to finally return to in-person rehearsals as a big group in early 2022.

Grace noted

'It's been stressful to get everything done and get on top of everything for the day we are all together. It's fun whenever we get there though.' Zoe touched on the benefits of in-person rehearsal too, noting that some of her really good friends were made through these rehearsals and 'it all sounds so much better in person, we can hear it!'.

These two young musicians are not shy of experience on stage and described some of their favourite

experiences at Music Generation performances.

“My favourite concert was the Gloria concert with senior strings with Armagh girls’ choir. It was the lead up rehearsing, travelling to Armagh. It was our first time working with another group. It was singers as well, not musicians, something we haven’t done before. We played in a big cathedral as well.”

Zoe (17)

“I like playing the Fleadh with the harps. It’s so much fun, you can hear other harpers and musicians play before you play your pieces. It’s just the excitement around it. I was involved in the first Fleadh.”

Grace (15)



Harp Collective performance at St. Patrick's Festival

Both musicians emphasised the real sense of connectivity and feeling of togetherness that comes from being on stage with Grace describing ‘You get up, you play, but you’re looking around, making sure everyone knows it! Once it’s done you feel the relief’.

Zoe added that

“There’s always excitement as well as nerves. Everybody gets nervous before a performance. There’s always that excitement of going on stage together and performing together.”

Zoe and Grace are hoping to pursue music in

college and discussed how music is such an integral part of their identity.

“Music is a pretty big part of my life. I’ve always been surrounded by music because my mam is a musician. I was so thankful to have music during the lockdown. My friends didn’t really have anything, our training was closed and they were just sitting at home and didn’t know what to do with themselves and I at least could go off and occupy my time with it. Also for mental health purposes, it was very beneficial!”

Zoe (17)

“Especially during lockdown. You’d have nothing to do but sit at the harp or with a violin or sing. With mental health it was a really great way to take your mind off things. You can just sit at the harp for an hour and not notice the time go by. It’s a big part of my life.”

Grace (15)

Introducing Donnchadh Hughes

In conversation with Music Generation, Donnchadh Hughes a 19-year-old multi-instrumentalist, Musician Educator and alumni of Music Generation Louth shares his Music Generation experience and how it felt to perform new music with three ensembles at a global celebration.

Tell us a little about yourself - what do you play, where are you from?

My name is Donnchadh Hughes and I’m a 19 year old multi-instrumentalist from Co. Louth. I play traditional flute and harp, along with classical piano. I started on the tin whistle with my local Comhaltas branch before adding other instruments along the way. I’ve been playing music for as long as I can remember!

How long have you been playing with Music Generation?

I started with [Music Generation Louth's Harp Ensemble](#) when it was formed in 2014, so around 8 years ago. I was very fortunate that the Music Generation Louth's Harp programme began at the same time that I took up the instrument, so I was able to be part of all the harping opportunities the ensemble enjoyed over the years.



Donnchadh Hughes

How long have you been working with Michael Rooney in anticipation for this performance?

This project with Michael Rooney has been in the works for quite some time, but was stalled considerably because of the pandemic. We started learning the music with Michael over Zoom around September of 2021, before our first gathering of all three harp ensembles at the [Harp and Pipes Tionól](#) in Co. Laois in October. From then on we used both in-person and online rehearsals to get to grips with the music and prepare for our performance.

How were the rehearsals for the premiere, what was most challenging?

Rehearsals were at times long and tiring, but Michael's music is so well suited for harp that it was really enjoyable to learn and rehearse. What was most challenging were the logistics and the short time scale to get the project over the line. We only had a few opportunities to bring the whole Harp Collective together to rehearse, and this meant St. Patrick's Festival was upon us before we even realised it! It was a testament to the high standard of musicianship among the 60-strong ensemble that the project was so successful in the end.

How have you found working with the Music Generation Musician Educators?

The Music Generation Educators were brilliant in their role in teaching us all four movements of Michael's work. Deirdre, Gráinne and Siobhán were on hand if we had any difficulty with the music and organised practices both as individual harp ensembles and as the larger collective. They really knitted the whole project together and it just wouldn't have been possible without all their hard work.

Have you performed with Music Generation before?

I have been very lucky to have been involved in many different performances with Music Generation in the past, most predominantly with Music Generation Louth's Harp Ensemble and Nós Nua – the Louth Youth Folk Orchestra, which was a joint venture between Music Generation Louth and [Oriel Centre](#) (Comhaltas).

Over the years we have played on stage at everything from the Fleadh to the Ray D'arcy Show, and even at an International Clay Target Shooting Championships!



Tell us a little bit about *Optimism* and your project with Music Generation Cork City?

Optimism was a project spearheaded by Aibhlín McCrann of Harp Ireland who wanted to reimagine the ancient relationship between the harper and the poet from Gaelic Ireland. Aibhlín got in contact with me the very first day I moved to Cork to start studying at UCC and within a few weeks I teamed up with the Kabin Studio in Cork to produce a harp and rap track for Harp Day 2021.

It was a completely new collaboration for me so I jumped at the opportunity and I'm so glad I did. I was blown away by the talent amongst the young rap artists in The Kabin. All I had to do was lay down a few recordings on the harp and they worked their magic!

Tell us about your day at Summoning a Harp Revival?

Summoning a Harp Revival was such an encouraging and memorable day for a number of reasons. One of the things I missed most during the pandemic was group performance for live audiences, so I was definitely spoilt getting to

perform on stage with three different ensembles for the St Patrick's Day Festival!

It was also so encouraging to step back and take stock of how far the harp has come over the last ten years, mostly due to the trojan work of organisations like Music Generation and Harp Ireland. Even in 2014, when I started with the Louth Harp Ensemble, there weren't

half as many harpers as there are now. All three performances were highlights for me, and I particularly enjoyed premiering so much new music – *Optimism* with the Kabin, *The Causeway Suite* with Nós Nua, and *Cláirseoireacht* with Music Generation Harp Collective.

How does performance make you feel?

Performance is something I'm growing to appreciate more and more since the pandemic. I think I'll take getting up on stage any day over having to record a video in my sitting room 10 times over! Being able to share my music with others and see their reaction is one of the highlights of music-making and I look forward to more of it with Music Generation in the future.

Since starting a Music and Irish degree at UCC, music plays an even bigger role in my life than before and I wouldn't want it any other way. What I enjoy most about it is the variety it brings to my life. One day I'm practising a Mozart Concerto on piano and the next day I'm at home in Dundalk teaching the Junior Harp Ensemble or composing music for University assignments. It can get very busy at times but I think that's a good complaint to have.

How has Music Generation influenced your life?

Music Generation has influenced my life in so many ways, many of which I've taken completely for granted. It sounds clichéd but I've met so many friends for life through my involvement with various musical projects.

I learned so much about music-making through Music Generation and am fortunate to now be able to pass it on as a Musician Educator for Music Generation Louth. All of this is on top of the incredible performance opportunities I have been a part of thanks to Music Generation.

Do you have any more musical projects or events on the cards this year?

For now, I need to put the head down for my end of year exams, but I'm looking forward to playing lots of music during the summer and finally getting to the World Harp Congress in Wales with The Music Generation Harp Collective!

About the Event

Summoning a Harp Revival took place at St. Patrick's Festival Quarter in Collins Barracks at 1pm on Saturday 19th March 2022. The programme was presented by Rosa Flannery, Siobhan Buckley, Deirdre Ní Bhuachalla, Gráinne Hambly, Kay Webster and William Jackson with special thanks to Michael Rooney, Mohsen Amini, Donnchadh Mac Aodha and Garry McCarthy.

Summoning a Harp Revival is created with the support of Harp Ireland, Oriel Centre, Dundalk Gaol, The Kabin Studio, Music Generation, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and The Arts Council / An Comhairle Ealaón.

Nós Nua: *Causeway*, a suite of new music from Mohsen Amini and performed by Nós Nua was funded by the Arts Council Young Ensemble Scheme with support by Oriel Centre, Dundalk Gaol and Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann.

The Kabin Studio: The young rap collective from Cork City performed 3 original tracks on the day *Optimism* (ft harper Donnchadh Hughes), *Misneach* and *Ya Boy*. The Kabin Studio is a community music space and recording studio supported by Music Generation Cork City, Cork City Council, Cork ETB & GMCBeats Workshops. it's a non-profit music and creative space for young people that want to write, record, sing, rap, rehearse, act, code, produce, podcast and just make some cool stuff.

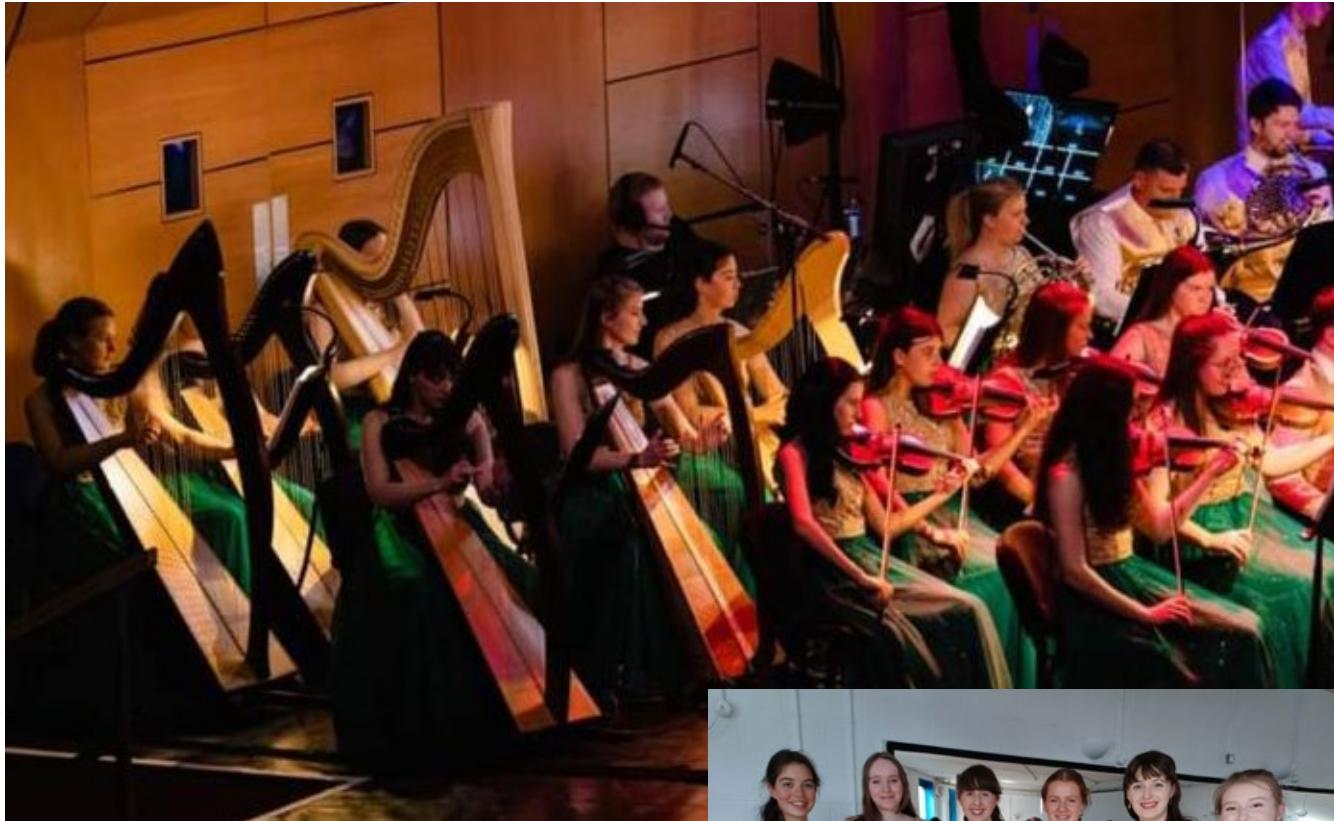
Laois Trad Orchestra performed *Ar an mBealach ar Ais*, a suite of music with 3 Movements (Aonrú, Sult & Dóchas) by Michael Rooney at Summoning a Harp Revival.

Music Generation Mayo Harp Collective performed 'Rebecca's Waltz' which was composed and arranged by Rebecca McCarthy Kent, followed by 'Eibhlí Gheal Chiúin' (Fair Gentle Eily) and 'Elizabeth Kelly's Favourite' which were arranged by Gráinne Hambly and William Jackson.

Don't miss out on any Music Generation updates! Follow us on social media and check out #MusicGeneration [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

Photos: Dave Keegan

Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland



The Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland (CBOI) was set up in 1995 shortly after the 'Peace Process' was implemented in Ireland to encourage peace between both sides of the border. It has since grown into much more than just a peace project and creates amazing opportunities for young people between the ages of 12 and 24 all over Ireland to travel the world and play in a professional orchestral environment.

Grace Cunningham (16) joined the orchestra last year and has thoroughly enjoyed the entire time she has been part of it. Generally, a harp section would only have 1 or 2 harps, so Grace was delighted to see that there were 6 harps in the harp section. It is an amazing experience for all the girls. It gives everyone in the orchestra an opportunity to play many different genres of music. Grace has loved



the concerts and being able to play in an orchestra to a choir of up to 1500 primary school kids has been such a magical experience.

In March 2023 the CBOI will be travelling to Carnegie Hall in New York! They will be playing on St. Patrick's Day to an audience of roughly 2,800 people. They are all very excited to be heading to America. This opportunity is a dream come true for everyone in the orchestra.

Grace Cunningham



14th World Harp Congress, Cardiff, Wales, 22-28 July 2022



L to R: Kara Lord Bissett, Aoibheann Galvin, Méabh McKenna, Rachel Duffy, Alfredo Rolando Ortiz, Síofra Ní Dhubhghaill and Fiona Gryson at the World Harp Congress

The World Harp Congress takes place every three years in a different city with past Congresses in Maastricht (1983), Jerusalem (1985), Vienna (1987), Paris-Sèvres (1990), Copenhagen (1993), Seattle-Tacoma (1996), Prague (1999), Geneva (2002), Dublin (2005), Amsterdam (2008), Vancouver (2011), Sydney (2014) and Hong Kong (2017).

Cardiff hosted the 14th World Harp Congress this summer, after a delay of two years due to the pandemic. We experienced six wonderful days of concerts, workshops, lectures, exhibitions and social events in some of the city's most impressive venues: Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff City Hall, St David's Hall and St Fagans National Museum of History. There was significant harp representation from Ireland, which was also reflected in the programme from concertos to harp ensembles.

The Irish lever harp took centre stage on the Concerto Night with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales at Cardiff City Hall, with the world premiere of Anne-Marie O'Farrell's 'In Light Anew', a new Concerto for Lever Harp and Orchestra, commissioned by RTÉ lyric fm. Anne-Marie performed to an appreciative and capacity audience, including Ms Denise Hanrahan, Consul General of Ireland to Wales. Later in the week, Anne-Marie directed the Harp Ensemble of the Royal Northern College of Music.

There were recitals by Maria Cleary and Tara Viscardi. Maria's performance focused on Baroque Concerti on historical instruments, and Tara was joined by Robert Harvey (traditional flute) and Meadbh O'Rourke (classical flute) to explore a programme on the themes of gender and genre, including her own compositions and arrangements.

Clare McCague, who has recently been awarded a PhD from Technological University Dublin for her research on the pedal harp in nineteenth-century Ireland, delivered a lecture-recital entitled 'Boleyne Reeves (1820-1905) harpist and composer: A forgotten Cork worthy'. I presented a lecture-recital focusing on Brian Boydell's compositions for harp.



L to R: Síofra Ní Dhubhghaill, Clare McCague, Fiona Gryson, Clóna Doris, Méabh McKenna, Rachel Duffy, Kara Lord Bissett and Aoibheann Galvin at the World Harp Congress

It was my privilege, as a member of the Board of Directors and Corporation of the World Harp Congress, to introduce six harp ensembles from Ireland: TU Dublin Harp Ensemble (Directors: Rachel Duffy and Fiona Gryson), Bray CCÉ Harp Ensemble (Director: Rachel Duffy), Music Generation Laois Harp Ensemble (Director: Siobhan Buckley), Music Generation Louth Harp Ensemble (Director: Deirdre Ní Bhuaichalla) and Music Generation Mayo Harp Ensemble (Directors: Gráinne Hambly and William Jackson) and the Music Generation Harp Collective performing *Cláirseoiracht* a new suite by Michael Rooney.

In celebrating the participation of Irish harpists at the 14th World Harp Congress, it is important to acknowledge Culture Ireland in their support of performances by Maria Cleary, Tara Viscardi and

the TU Dublin Harp Ensemble; RTÉ lyric fm for their commission of a harp concerto by Anne-Maire O'Farrell; and Music Generation and the Arts Council's Creativity and Collaboration Fund for the commission of Michael Rooney's new suite for the Music Generation Harp Collective.

There were many highlights, but I will long remember the very special evening spent in St Fagans National Museum of History honouring 'The Harp and Music of Wales'. We were greeted with a performance by Ensemble Telyn Cymru (Wales Harp Ensemble) in the Atrium of the Museum, which included 'The Dingle Starry' a new composition by Irish composer Vincent Kennedy and a rendition of 'Brian Boru's March'. We then enjoyed a beautiful summer night's walk around the historic buildings of Wales, listening to performances by distinguished Welsh harpists,

storytellers, and a male voice choir accompanied by harp. Finally, we returned to the main building for a traditional Welsh Twmpath and I can attest to enthusiastic dancing by the Irish harpists!

We send congratulations to our brilliant Welsh hosts and thank them for a beautifully crafted and joyous harp week. In particular, our appreciation to Caryl Thomas (Chair), Catrin Finch (Artistic Director) and Stephen Burkitt-Harrington (Event Director).

Finally, I wish to pay tribute to the significant and valued contribution of Cairde na Cruite's President Sheila Larchet Cuthbert to the World Harp Congress over many years, firstly as the Correspondent representing Ireland, then as a member of the Board of Directors and later as a

member of the Corporation, and her leadership in the Ninth World Harp Congress Dublin 2005. She has supported and encouraged many harpists from Ireland in their engagement with the World Harp Congress. Sheila was unable to attend the Cardiff Congress, but how proud she must be of the large Irish delegation in Wales this summer.

We look forward to another international gathering in 2026 and for more information on the World Harp Congress visit www.worldharpcongress.com.

Professor Clíona Doris
TU Dublin Conservatoire
Member of the Board of
Directors and Corporation
of the World Harp Congress



Aisling Lyons | This Year's Recap...

In January, I travelled to Tromso, Northern Norway to play as part of Sami singer and film maker's EALAT - a documentary film about Ella Marja Eira's homeland as a reindeer herder in her community. The film focused on how the climate crisis is affecting the people, the reindeer and their lands. The film was part of the Tromso International Film Festival. The music was arranged but was based on improvisations. This was my first time playing music live to a film & it was performed in an empty swimming pool in the Arctic Circle! It was an incredible experience. Myself and Dermot Sheedy travelled over to play for the film and we had the pleasure of meeting English and Norwegian musicians also. Later in the year, I composed music for Ella Marja's short film which premiered at The Biennale in Venice.

We travelled over to see it in September.

In March & April, I toured Germany and Switzerland with '3 on the Bund'. This was the longest tour I've been on yet - and when we came home, 3 on the Bund launched the album *Frenzy*. We launched this at home at The Fleadh Nua in Ennis, at Dolan's in Limerick & The Gathering in Killarney to name a few places. I had the pleasure of supporting Altan as part of the Micho Russell Festival in Doolin in April also.

The summer was busy with various summer schools; Consairtín in Ennis, Swaledale Concertina Festival in England, Jim Dowling Piping Festival, Tune Fest Dungarvan, Blas International Summer School, Scoil Samhradh Willie Clancy, Meitheal

Summer School and Keadue Harp Festival. I on the Bund performed on *Fleadh TV* from Mullingar and I had the privilege of playing for the tribute to Aisling Murphy at the end of the live show for TG4. I was delighted to also be a part of Harp Ireland's *Harps Alive* Concert in Belfast. It was so lovely to connect with a bunch of wonderful harpers from around the country.

September took me to Paris! Myself and fashion designer Margaret O'Connor flew over to be a part of the Irish Cultural Centre's official opening night of Aideen Barry's *Oblivion* which was supported by ITMA & Music Network. I played for the official opening which also coincided with the Cultural Centre's 21st birthday celebrations. Fellow Clare man Daithí ended the night with a brilliant DJ set. While we were in Paris, we met with the current Irish ambassador Niall Burgess who was very keen on promoting the harp in Paris - to the extent that I may have planted a seed in his head to commission an Irish harp maker to make a harp for the Embassy (watch this space!)

When I came home from Paris, I was straight into work with my band Harpanno. We embarked on an Autumn tour which coincided with our debut album Kickstarter campaign. We played in Ennis, Limerick, Cork, Laois and finished the tour with a gorgeous night in Hotel Doolin where Steve Cooney played a beautiful set before us. We reached our Kickstarter goal and have the album underway for release in the Spring.

I had the pleasure of playing with Clare Sands for her album launch tour in October. We played Live at St. Luke's in Cork, Secret Song in Ballydehob and The Cobblestone in Dublin. The last weekend in October saw me travel to The Isle of Wight for the Harp on Wight Festival. I was delighted to be

asked to be the Irish harper invited this year. I met some lovely students and gave my longest ever solo set – 90 minutes in total. It was a great buzz and it was received so well. The week after I arrived home, I woke up one morning to the news that I had been nominated for two RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards: Best Folk Instrumentalist and Best Emerging Artist. What a humbling feeling. I'm honoured and look forward to the celebrations night on the 17th of November in Vicar Street. The night after, I will be playing in glór, Ennis for Merfolk. Merfolk is a project that was funded by glór and Creative Ireland Clare. This new project with Sean Lyons and Dermot Sheedy is dear to my heart. It is based on the music and song of County Clare.



Aisling Lyons in Germany with Aisling Urwin, Colm Broderick, Muireann Ní Shé and Carl Hession

I will end the year by going on tour for the month of December to Germany with fellow harper Aisling Urwin, piper Colm Broderick, Muireann Ní Shé and Carl Hession. Scoil Gheimhrídh Ghaoth Dobhair saw us into the new year where I taught concertina masterclasses alongside my old teacher and hero Noel Hill. I'm very grateful for the brilliant opportunities I've had this year ... I might get a rest sometime soon!

Aisling Lyons

Rosie Murphy | This Year's Recap...

Over the past year, harpist Rosie Murphy displayed her passion for composition and performance as she embarked on many projects to create new works. Rosie is currently studying classical harp under Ernestine Stoop and Sylvain Bassel as well as taking a minor in Sonology at the Royal Conservatory of the Hague.

Rosie was chosen as a composer and harpist for the '21 Artists for the 21st century' programme and was mentored by Neil Martin to compose a work for harp, violin and French horn that represented an Irish landscape. This piece, *Li Ban* was subsequently performed and recorded in The Sonic Arts Research Centre in Belfast.



Rosie Murphy and with violinist Samuel Kane and Conall McHugh on French horn, at the St Brigid's Day Gala concert in The London Irish Centre

Over the past year, it was performed by Rosie and her trio, with violinist Samuel Kane and Conall McHugh on French horn, in Saint James' Palace London, The Lyric Theatre Belfast and for the St Brigid's Day Gala concert in The London Irish Centre. Rosie's composition for solo harp from the suite was chosen to be performed at a recital to celebrate music in Northern Ireland in No.10 Downing street last November.

At this event, Rosie got the opportunity to explain the legend of 'Li Ban', which translates to 'the beauty of women' in old Irish. Li Ban is Ireland's lesser known female saint and her story originates from the formation of Lough Neagh. This solo composition was also recorded and used for the Irish Embassy in The Hague's Saint Patrick's Day online event. At the Irish Embassy last December, Rosie also got the amazing opportunity to perform for the Irish Ambassador, Brendan Rogers and the King of the Netherlands. For Lá na Cruite | Harp Day this October, Rosie performed the suite alongside violinist Samuel Kane and French horn player Joe Clarkson for the Gala Concert.

This Summer, Rosie began her residency as a composer at the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown LexIcon. She embarked on composing a new work for harp and flute entitled 'Farewell 2', that was inspired and dedicated to Carolan's Farewell to Music. Rosie experimented with textures, extended techniques and sounds to create this contemporary work. She premiered it in late August and then later for Culture Night with flautist Martina O'Connell, both at The LexIcon studio.

In July 2023, Rosie will be performing Handel's Harp Concerto with the Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra.

Rosie Murphy

Anne-Marie O'Farrell

This Year's Recap...

New Head of Harp at RNCM

In January of this year Dr Anne-Marie O'Farrell took up her new post as Head of Harp at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. She writes, 'I'm enjoying discovering the scope of a conservatoire in a city such as Manchester which is bustling with cultural activity. As the city with the largest student population in Europe, there's a lot of young energy around, and it's perfectly set up for student life! The department caters for undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as being part of the junior conservatoire programme on Saturdays. It was a great pleasure to bring all the harp students together to celebrate Lá na Cruite at the RNCM this year for the first time.'

Amerghin at Smithfield Fleadh

The group Amerghin, featuring Cormac Breathnach (whistles), Aingeala de Búrca (violin), Brian Fleming (percussion) and Anne-Marie O'Farrell (harp) were featured on the main stage of the Smithfield Fleadh in June. Their unique combination includes tunes old and new from Ireland and around the world, original compositions, improvisations and new arrangements, frequently featuring tunes from the harping tradition.

Rapid Art Force in Finland

This dynamic and innovative group performed concerts throughout Finland in August in venues ranging from a fishing museum, and a remote tiny island to a nuclear power station. Musicians Timo



Anne-Marie O'Farrell visited Bow Brand harp string factory in King's Lynn where she and her family were warmly welcomed by Stuart Warren and Sharon Smith. It was a memorable experience!

Kinnunen (accordion), Paul Roe (clarinet), Anne-Marie O'Farrell (konghou/Chinese double strung harp), Adrian Mantu (cello), Anastassia Grigori (performance artist) and Lotta Rauta (acrobat) create improvisatory, site-specific performances, drawing on a range of musical influences as ignition points as they combine their live instruments with electronics.

Irish Harp Concerto World Premiere

Anne-Marie O'Farrell performed the world premiere of her Irish harp concerto, 'In Light



Anne-Marie O'Farrell at the World Harp Congress, Cardiff

'Anew' (commissioned by RTÉ Lyric FM) with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales conducted by Ariane Matiakh at the World Harp Congress. This was part of an evening of concertos featuring Sally Beamish's pedal harp concerto, *Hive* performed by Catrin Finch, and Reinhold Gliere's harp concerto played by Anneleen Lenaerts.

Also at the World Harp Congress, the Royal Northern College of Music Harp Ensemble performed a recital programme including the

Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland commission 'Cúige na Cruitirí', a five-movement suite for harp ensemble.

Harps at Farmleigh

Anne-Marie O'Farrell and Cormac de Barra performed a duo recital at the magnificent Farmleigh House on 22nd October, featuring two pedal harps, Irish harps and songs with harp.



At the World Harp Congress, Cardiff, Holly-Alice Morton, Imogen Garnett, Jess Hughes, Ellie Wood and Angharad Huw with their teacher Anne-Marie O'Farrell

Composer Notes from Anne-Marie O'Farrell

Hats off to orchestral harpists Elizabeth McNulty and Geraldine O'Doherty who performed in some of my orchestral performances this year. Elizabeth is harpist with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, who performed my 'Rann Dó Trí' in a series of school concerts reaching no fewer than 11,000 children. The piece was part of a concert programme on the theme of migration, a most resonant topic in the city of Liverpool. Geraldine O'Doherty of the RTÉ Concert Orchestra was called upon to do many things with her harp in my civil war cantata, 'Who'd Ever Think It Would Come to This?', including banging the bass wires with soup spoons. The subject matter called for vivid musical depiction so well suited to the harp, whether of trundling lorries, fires burning, or capturing poignant moments of lyricism and

delicacy. The harp symbolised the sovereignty of the nation as it was used to open and close the work.

The cantata was premiered in UCD's O'Reilly Hall by the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, Resurgam, and vocal soloists conducted by Ciarán Crilly. www.civilwarcantata.ie

New Commission for Saxophone and Harp
Harpist Tara Viscardi and saxophonist Robert Finegan commissioned Anne-Marie O'Farrell to compose a piece lightly referencing elements of



Irish music. The result is 'The Jolly Figs' a quick-witted, fast-paced musical duel between the two instruments, which premiered in London's Irish Heritage Centre on 30th June. They plan to record it for their new EP in Spring 2023.

Triad Trio News



Síofra Ní Dhubhghaill, Rachel Duffy and Fiona Gryson

Triad Trio (Fiona Gryson, Rachel Duffy and Síofra Ní Dhubhghaill) have enjoyed exploring contemporary and historical repertoire in a number of performances this year.

First up was ‘Summer Sounds,’ a series of short performances in TU Dublin Conservatoire as part of the Stoneybatter Festival. We were delighted to perform alongside fellow students and graduates of the Conservatoire on Saturday 18 June in TU Dublin’s new concert hall.

The following day, Sunday 19 June, we represented Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland at the inaugural Smithfield Fleadh, a new Dublin-based traditional music festival. There was a great atmosphere on the day with artists performing across four different stages in Smithfield Square. Our performance

focused on early harp music, much of which was connected to the area. It was a valuable opportunity to reflect on the role of collectors and publishers in preserving harp repertoire and to bring these pieces to life again.

The next stop was County Louth. Following our virtual appearance at An Chúirt Chruitireachta 2021, we were thrilled to perform live at this year’s festival. We were in excellent company at the Festival’s opening concert ‘Réaltaí Ceoil Chonamara agus Teach Lán le Cruitír’ on Thursday 30 June. The concert also featured performances from Séamus Ó Flatharta, Caoimhe Ní Fhlatharta, Máire Ní Chathasaigh, Deirdre Ní Bhuachalla, Deirdre Granville, Kathleen Loughnane, Úna Ní Fhlannagáin and Cormac de Barra.

Our most recent venture saw us return to the first work we performed as a trio, T.C. Kelly's *Suite for Three Irish Harps* in preparation for Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland's HARPS PLUS+ Symposium on 26 November. Unfortunately, Covid foiled our plans to perform the piece as a trio. Nevertheless, it was a welcome chance to engage with the piece again and we hope to perform it in the near future. Many thanks to Professor Clíona Doris for stepping in to save the day, performing the piece with Fiona and Síofra as part of the Symposium and again at

Farmleigh House that evening. Fiona and Síofra also partook in a discussion about the work with Aibhlín McCrann as part of the Symposium, exploring their approach to preparing it for performance and to working in an ensemble.

It has been another great year of harping and we are looking forward to collaborating again in 2023.

Rachel Duffy

TU Dublin Conservatoire Harp Ensemble News



TU Dublin Conservatoire Harp Ensemble performing at the CÉHI Harps Plus+ Symposium 2022.
L-R: Eimear McDonagh, Julieta De Cicco, Síofra Ni Dhubhghaill, Kara Lord Bissett, Fiona Gryson, Aoibhe Kettle and Aoibheann Galvin

In October 2021, following the retirement of Denise Kelly-McDonnell, Rachel Duffy and I took on the roles of co-directors of the TU Dublin Conservatoire Harp Ensemble. We have big shoes to fill.

The first project that was undertaken by the ensemble was an audio and visual recording in honour of Denise, recorded in the new, purpose-

built concert hall in the East Quad Building on the Grangegorman campus on 14th March 2022. A clip of the ensemble performing 'Seasick Dee' by Damien O'Kane, arr. Gráinne Meyer, which was coordinated by Professor Clíona Doris, recorded by Ben Rawlins, filmed by Conor Mulhern and produced by Laoise O'Brien, is available to view [here](#). Many thanks to all involved in the project.

Preparations then began for the ensemble's trip to the World Harp Congress in Cardiff, Wales. First, on 12th July, the ensemble performed at the harp ensemble extravaganza concert as part of the 'Music on the Farm' concert series at Cornstown House in Co. Dublin and were joined by Bray CCÉ Harp Ensemble directed by Rachel Duffy, Elver Ensemble directed by Gráinne Meyer and Fingal Ensemble directed by Fiona Gryson for a joyous evening of harping.

After that, we packed up and travelled to perform at the 14th World Harp Congress which was hosted at The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff, Wales from 22nd-28th July 2022. Former members of the ensemble were invited to join us for the performance and it was wonderful to perform all together at the Congress. The full ensemble featured Aoibheann Galvin, Claire O'Donnell, Clare McCague, Eimear McDonagh, Fiona Gryson, Gráinne Meyer, Kara Lord Bissett, Luke Webb, Méabh McKenna, Rachel Duffy, Síofra Ní Dhubhghaill and Siobhán Flynn with Robert Harvey on flutes and whistles. Our programme included arrangements by Gráinne Yeats, Gráinne Meyer, Gráinne Hambly and William Jackson and a composition by Luke Webb. We all had an absolutely amazing time being surrounded by harps, harpists and harp music from morning to night and are already looking forward to the next Congress due to take place in four years time.

On 20th September, a quartet of players from the ensemble were well-received as we performed an evening programme at the Mansion House as part of the Walk '21 Conference.

Most recently, the ensemble performed as part of the Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland 'Harps Plus+ Symposium' on 26th November which was in association with TU Dublin Conservatoire and hosted in the East Quad Building on the Grangegorman campus. We were delighted to be involved in this important event. As soon as the symposium ended we headed to the beautiful venue that is Farmleigh House and Estate. We had a wonderful evening performing solo, duets, trios and ensemble pieces at the Dublin Philharmonic Society concert.

We look forward to what is to come in 2023.



Farmleigh House and Estate: photo credit Gaia Sessa

Fiona Gryson
Co-director TU Dublin Conservatoire Harp Ensemble

Music on the farm Concert Series

Main image: Cornstown House concert setting
Centre: Fiona Gryson and Síofra Ní Dhubhghaill

The 'Music on the Farm' concert series, curated by harpist Fiona Gryson, in association with Dominic and Fionnuala Gryson at Cornstown House Farm, enjoyed a fantastic second year of live, outdoor concerts at Cornstown House in 2022.

Cornstown House is an 18th century farmhouse with a certified organic farm set in the rolling hills of Fingal, County Dublin. It is a beautiful farm which is surrounded by nature; with plenty of space, fresh air, fields to explore, animals to visit and farming activities to experience. Alpaca trekking is run throughout the year and the animal barn hosts an array of friendly animals from alpacas and donkeys to sheep and goats. The Cornstown Coffee Hut opens up for concerts and is a wonderful addition to the concert experience offering great coffee,



fantastic hot chocolate and tasty treats.

From February to October 2022, the concerts took place in the evenings on the second Tuesday of every month but since November the concerts have changed to Sunday afternoons at 3pm.

The 2022 line-up included incredible performances from Gráinne Meyer (harp) with special guests Aisling O'Connor (flute), Caoimhe Giles (harp) and Avril Molloy (prose) in February, Róisín Ward Morrow (fiddle and voice), Breifne Holohan (guitar) and Dominic Gryson (poetry) in April, Luke Webb (harp) and Fiona Gryson (harp) in May, Máire Ní Chaoimh (fiddle), Aoife Ní Chaoimh (fiddle) and Róisín O'Connor (fiddle) in June, a harp ensemble extravaganza



L to R: Rachel Duffy, Fionn Ó hAlmhain and Robert Harvey at Cornstown House

featuring Bray CCÉ ensemble directed by Rachel Duffy, Elver ensemble directed by Gráinne Meyer, Fingal ensemble directed by Fiona Gryson and TU Dublin co-directed by Rachel Duffy and Fiona Gryson in July, Tara Viscardi (harp) and Robert Finegan (saxophone) in August, Méabh McKenna (harp and voice) and Jaymee (harp and fiddle, Ryan (harp) and Kayla (harp) Martin in September, Welsh harpist Marged Hall in October, Fiona Gryson (harp) and Garrett Reagan (poetry) in November and Maria Matthews (soprano) and Fiona Gryson (harp) in December.



Gráinne Meyer at Cornstown House

up again people return for the unique experience of hearing fantastic live music with some animal accompaniment in a beautiful, natural setting. The concerts are going from strength to strength and planning is currently underway for the 2023 season.



Caoimhe Giles and Aisling O'Connor

In a time when performing and attending concerts was difficult, this series offered musicians and audiences the opportunity to perform and hear live music again and now when everything is opened



Luke Webb at Cornstown House

Please contact Fiona Gryson at fionagryson@gmail.com if you would be interested in performing in a future concert.

Fiona Gryson

Reflections of a Mother-Artist

Photo: Maxwell Photography, by kind permission of Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland



I am a harpist, a musician, a conjurer of creative things, a bringer together of people, a dreamer, an optimist. A mother of three young children. Every day I walk the tight rope. As a mother who makes art, an artist who mothers, I try (impossibly) to engage and connect with that quiet and artistic inner voice without impeding the endless needs of the tiny people I've made.

This is a recent endeavour - to be conscious enough of that inner artist that I fight daily to maintain an active connection with it. The pandemic, for all its woes and challenges, gave me the space to go inward, to banish the 'dancing monkey' of my gigging life and to rediscover my own personal connection with

my craft. When the diary went blank and the noise of all those cancelled gigs subsided, when I was left with just me and an idle monkey, I finally blew away the dust and there, in the corner of the attic of myself, beneath a flurry of sequin dresses, high heeled shoes, lipstick and the shells of a thousand peanuts, was the

source of my artistic curiosity and my deep love of music. These gems had been dismissed by the rest of me for quite some time.

Initially, during the first lockdown of 2020, when I would sit behind the harp I did not have any desire to play even one note. I felt empty. Numb. Finished. No gigs, no audiences, no deadlines – there was no point.

I continued to ignore the harp, and baked bread instead. I grew food, I ran, I wrote, I mothered. Eventually though, bit by bit my feelings of apathy started to shift and in September 2020 I started a weekly online concert series called Harp O'Clock. This was a requests concert series with the audience choosing the programme. I was inspired by my fellow harpist and pal Olivia Jageurs who started her Zoom concert series in March 2020 in the UK. Although I had no desire to play music for myself it was deeply moving to play requests that helped isolated people feel connected again. I felt of service. The love of practice, the feel of the harp on my shoulder, the tension of those strings in my hand – brought me back to my own musical journey.

You see, for the longest time, the inner perfectionist voice had ruled court in my head. The mess and noise of making art is far too risky for a perfectionist. So, I got busy gigging instead. I did not listen to the quiet inner voice that simply wants to curiously play, share, connect, inspire and wonder.

I didn't realise that for me, the inner artist and the inner perfectionist hold hands.

So now, I maintain my inner committee as I move through life as an artist who mothers, walking my own personal tightrope. I unceasingly muse, question and wonder as I work, as I breastfeed the baby, as I make dinner and the myriad tasks that fill my mothering days. My inner committee and I debate endlessly. The dancing monkey, the constant questioning, the quiet inner intuiting, and the rest of me. The inner committee is always there. It's there as I concoct programmes on school drop offs, it's there when I practice. It's there throughout every stage of my artistic process.

As I look back over the arc of the last two years, I can see that although I had no master plan, no fancy strategy, I managed to steer a course. I navigated my way here.

As I look back over the arc of the last two years, I can see that although I had no master plan, no fancy strategy, I managed to steer a course. I navigated my way here.

'Here' (now) looks a lot like 'there' (before). I make arty things that involve harps. But now, I am more confident to steer my own path. I share the joy and deep connection I feel for music and stories.

The universe is utterly ambivalent so do the thing. Who knows where

it might lead?

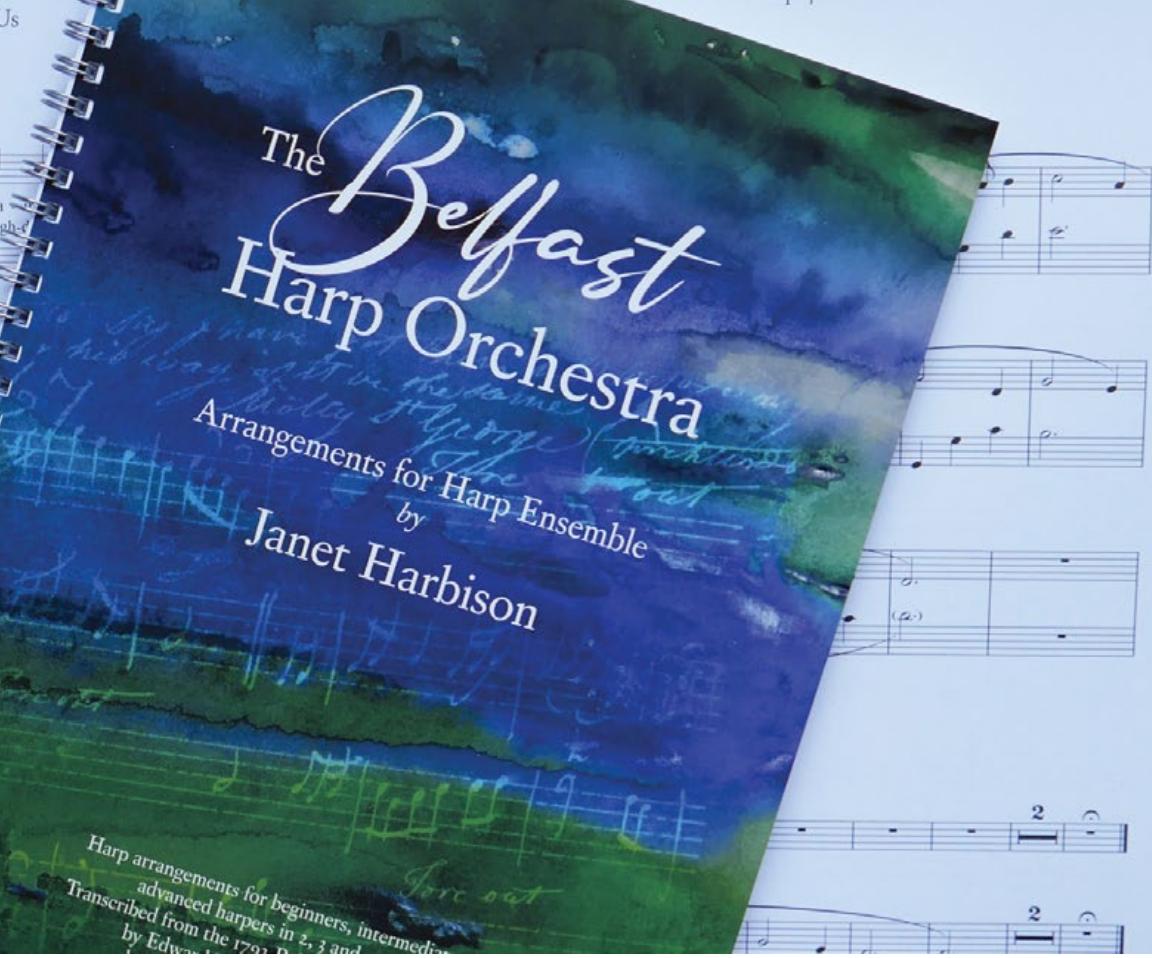
Aisling Ennis

(Cairde na Cruite would like to gratefully acknowledge Wicklow County Arts Office for granting permission to include this article, published originally as part of their *Artists Connect* blog series)



A Andante = 100 B & C (Verses 1 & 2)

Samh - radh Samh - radh, Ba - bá - bog na Beal - tai - ne Maigh -
Thug - a - mar fein an Samh -



Harp Ensembles – the new way to enjoy music

Perhaps 2022 should be marked as the year of the coming of age of Harp Ensembles nationwide as many Irish counties now boast their own harp ensembles. And, at the Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland Harps Plus+ Symposium at TU Dublin Conservatoire on November 26th, someone suggested that “Harp Ensembles should be heralded as a ‘new genre’ in Irish harping”. Certainly with the support of the Arts Council and various Music Generation offices, there is new energy with the accessibility of instruments which has always been ‘the’ challenge for aspiring teachers and players.

At the Symposium, the first dedicated book of Harp Ensembles (from the archives of the Belfast Harp Orchestra), published by Cruit Eireann |

Harp Ireland and sponsored by The Arts Council, was launched.

In this first Ensembles book, there are 10 pieces ranging from the well-known ‘Carolan’s Concerto’ and ‘Planxty Johnston’, ‘Molly Mac Alpin’, ‘An Cailín Donn’ (better known as Thomas Moore’s ‘Oh Breath Not His Name’) and the wonderful children’s song: ‘Thugamar Féin an Samhradh Linn’ (We brought the Summer with us) – to the lesser known ‘Gentle Little Rose’, the haunting ‘Irish Lullaby’, the naughty and playful ‘Adventurous Rake’ and the jaunty jig-like piece ‘Oscail an Doras Go Ciúin Ó’ (Open the Door Softly Oh!). Each piece is presented as a full score to start with showing how the parts go together, and all parts are

included in the volume encouraging players to ‘grow’ with their performance skills – from ‘Beginner’ through ‘Intermediate’ to the ‘Advanced’ parts.

The pieces are presented in a variety of arrangement styles. In ‘Carolan’s Concerto’ for instance, every part has the lead melody (while Beginners get a rest in the beginning of the second half of the piece), ‘The Irish Lullaby – Iombó agus Éiriú’ has a characterful accompaniment theme running alongside the tune that in itself is playable as a ‘solo’; and another style is evident in ‘Thugamar Féin an Samhradh Linn – We Brought the Summer With Us’ with the very easy repeated patterns of 2 notes – totally manageable for complete beginners!

The idea of a harp ensemble has chiefly evolved from harp schools – and most particularly the harp schools involved in supplying performing groups of harpists to the famous ‘Irish cabaret’ such as at Juries’ Hotel in Dublin. This cabaret thrived from the 1950s as the Irish tourism industry rose to post-war prominence – fronted with the image of the Irish colleen (young girl) singing sweetly to her own harp accompaniment. This was the tradition of harping at this time – until the late 1960s when the guitar and other stringed instruments joined in session

playing after the dramatic influence of the trendy Irish trad bands such as ‘The Bothy Band’, ‘Planxty’ and ‘Clannad’. Also, the introduction of more robust Japanese (Aoyama) harps with improved ‘up-down’ semitone mechanisms made a significant impact on the playability of instrumental music – dance music in particular.

The idea of an ensemble wasn’t new – and in the classical tradition, there were duets, trios etc. with some ensembles included in the 1975 *Irish Harp Book* (edited by Sheila Larchet Cuthbert and published by Cairde na Cruite). This book was the first book of notated music for harp players (and ensembles) after centuries of only oral transmission – but of course it allows us to make the music accessible to readers – in the same way as books to language speakers!

While the written resources become more numerous and available, the oral transmission of music continues with the more ‘traditional’ teaching practices. It is in the last decade or two that we are coming to realise the value of both the oral and the notated tradition – which is another great adventure underway for the pedagogy (teaching) of Irish harp... But back to the rise of the ensembles story...



1988 Ulster Hall
inaugral concert



Harpers at UFTM 1980s

The Belfast Harp Orchestra (from 1986-2002), Irish (1999-) and Irish Youth Harp Orchestras (2004-2016), the National Folk Orchestra and then, later, the ensembles of Michael Rooney and Grainne Hambly, continue to teach their ensembles ‘orally’ even though many of their pieces are also now available to other ensembles in print. This is a very exciting development which will certainly underwrite the next chapters in Irish harping – as we use the written note to protect our authorship and make our work as composers or arrangers accessible to everyone.

I started the harp in 1967 at that famous cabaret-ensemble-producing harp school at ‘Sion Hill’ with our teacher, the inimitable Máirín Ní Shé (Mrs Ferriter). To sing with the harp was the norm

of the time, and our icons were Mary O’Hara, Kathleen Watkins and Deirdre Callaghan and their success in press cuttings was celebrated on the walls of our harp room behind the stage in the school concert hall. My father bought one of the newly arrived Japanese harps in about 1969 as I was found to be skipping too many classes in school – and I was one of many students. All our weekly lessons were of 40 minutes duration and there were always 2 or 3 of us in a class. So, learning and practising together was our ‘normal’. When I was aged 18, Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Eireann moved their head office to Monkstown close to my home, and at least on two nights every week, I would play in the sessions with all the other instruments, picking up the tunes after many weeks, and strumming away on my accompaniment chords until the tunes were



Belfast Harp Orchestra recording with The Chieftains in 1992 at the National Concert Hall

'on my ear'. It was an organic process, as it was for every musician there – playing socially and purely for pleasure. There was no pedagogical process, no curriculum, no pressure to practise and no exams. But it did have its scale of excellence that was determined in your winnings at the fleadhs (annual county, regional and national competitions).

I was also a trained classical musician – born into a house with two accomplished grandmother musicians and a father that had wished to be a concert pianist but the war had intervened. I started my formal piano lessons at age 4 (in the Dublin College of Music, now TU Dublin Conservatoire) and I was relatively accomplished from an early age. I was literate for my classical music studies, and my traditional music interest was non-literate - although my peers at college once quipped that 'traditional players were illiterate' – but this too is

another story! Literacy also wasn't relevant to my teaching experience and it wasn't until I created my own 'ensemble' and ran a large teaching practice in Limerick that I brought my literacy to bear from my classical training. This was because I worked between the two worlds of classical and traditional music – and I found myself dipping from one to the other as necessity demanded...

I was proud of our Belfast Harp Orchestra — we were a tight and disciplined group – motivated by a range of elements. The first was to make a harp concert viable. People will have been familiar with harps playing background music in a hotel foyer or coffee shop, at church and at weddings and funerals. I wanted to ensure that we could hold our own as a concert performance featuring our historical and contemporary repertoire. I wanted to create spectacle – with the young members having fun with their own music — so motive number 2 could play its part. My reason for creating the BHO was to give a voice to both communities in Northern Ireland in a shared heritage – where we could present our story on stage for both a local as well as national and international audience. I needed to attract players from both communities, their parents, neighbourhoods and communities as there was no state support for us to begin with. The Arts Council in Northern Ireland neither recognized our music as classical or traditional, therefore we didn't fit their 'boxes'. I wanted both traditional and classical music followers in our audience – so in addition to the spectacle, I invited 'celebrity personalities' to feature with us – such as the much loved Dr Havelock Nelson who 'conducted' our inaugural concert in May 1988. Our concert was scored for him – and our leading singer, Paul Nameer from Belfast Opera also had a score for his pieces.

When the orchestra started touring in 1992, it was also necessary for me to have all our programmes scored as there were occasions when I suddenly dropped out of operation (health issues), so someone else could jump in to conduct or direct or teach as needed in my absence. This also allowed me to share the load with my more senior members, giving them the confidence to do this for themselves in their future teaching practices.

While all my orchestra members would get written scores for every tune, we used the scripts as ‘memory aids’ – and most of my lovely but lazy orchestra members, were quite happy never to use them – so I did fail in managing to wean them onto the scripted music – something I addressed later in my teaching practise!

Nevertheless, I had learned a lot of tricks to get the results I wanted from my orally trained orchestra —that may be helpful to the convenors of the new harp ensembles evolving around the country.

Firstly, I use what I call ‘rhythmic repetition’ to teach the tunes – which involves repetition of phrases and segments of phrases which are repeated as if in ‘a loop’ so the melody is worked into the fingers and memory. The judicious ‘breaking and rebuilding’ of melody is also a factor in ensuring that music is learned efficiently and within the time-frame of the piece. This rhythmic repetition is also a ruse to preserve energy as a lot of ‘stop-start’ing is exhausting both for the teacher as well as the member. All parts of a piece are arranged so each is playable as a ‘solo’ in its own right – so the music sounds sensible to the folk at home when it’s



The Harp Orchestra at Folk Museum 1992

being practised there. I constantly ‘reference the tune’ so all ensemble members know where we are in the music and never get lost.. and it is important to start up, in rhythm, from clear ‘pick-up’ points in the music.



BHO at the Kennedy Centre Washington 1993

To ensure motivation, I used my knowledge of psychology and business leadership (having undertaken an MBA course in the middle of the Orchestra years).

To ensure the members saw a clear path to progress, all my arrangements had ‘ranked parts’ from ‘Junior part’ through ‘Intermediate’ to ‘Senior parts’ and as soon as a member was ready, they would be ‘bumped up’ a grade (with senior players being additionally tasked with covering a Junior Part in a piece if it was important). Everyone had chances to shine in ‘mini solos’ in the course of pieces (usually comprising audible variations to a part) and special solo opportunities were given to the members making the best efforts, doing the most consistent practising, being the most punctual (although this was entirely the parent’s issues – but it ensured that the students were invested to get to rehearsals on time!). Solos were also given to the naughty students – the ‘trouble makers’ and the rebels so to keep their focus on the music and to know they

were relied on to support the team!

All players had ‘study-buddies’ and it was up to a pair or trio of members to help each other — and each orchestra section had a ‘team leader’ who had responsibility to ensure their members all knew their music, had their costumes ironed (though this was the responsibility of our back-stage management team of parents – equally organised) etc. etc. We had to be efficient as we performed an average of 22 concerts a year with at least one international trip, and to manage the ‘no shows’ (people who couldn’t turn up at concerts for one reason or another), senior players (if needed in addition to myself) were relied on to ‘fill the gaps’ giving them shared responsibility for the overall success of the concert.

There are indeed other challenges facing ensembles – such as ‘competitive poaching’ of members from one group to another; ‘good weather members’ who turn up occasionally or leave your ensemble when a brighter opportunity turns up; the scourge of ‘professionalism’ as the moneyed gigs will always take precedence over ensemble concerts or rehearsals... But there is much to delight in our ‘new genre’ of harping – onward and upward I say and best wishes to all.

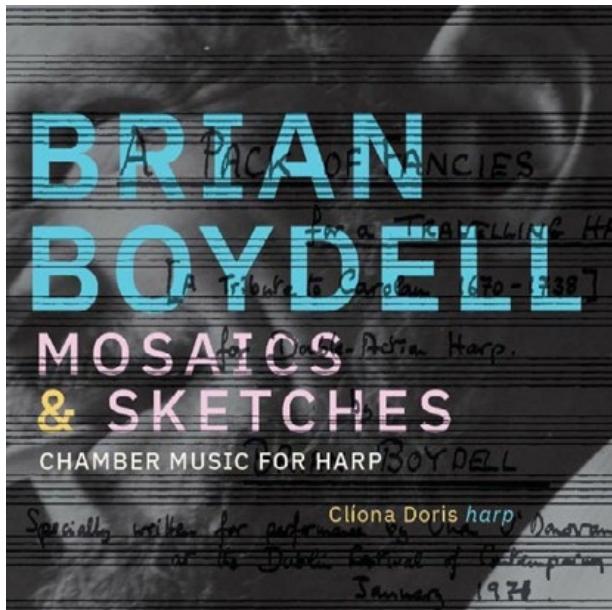
Janet Harbison



New Releases

Harp Albums and Videos

Cliona Doris | Brian Boydell: Mosaics & Sketches – Chamber Music for Harp (2022)



Mosaics and Sketches explores the Irish composer Brian Boydell's chamber music for harp written over two decades, 1960–1980. In this recording, Cliona Doris performs Boydell's solo work for pedal harp, *A Pack of Fancies for a Travelling Harper* and is joined by TU Dublin Conservatoire colleagues in three chamber works: *Four Sketches* for two Irish harps, *Five Mosaics* for violin and harp, and *Quintet* for flute, harp and string trio.

The recording was funded through a research grant from Technological University Dublin and in keeping with the University's Open Research ethos, the recording is made publicly available through a Creative Commons Attribution

Non-Commercial Share Alike 4.0 International Licence. www.tudublin.ie

The support of RTÉ lyric fm and the Contemporary Music Centre for this recording is gratefully acknowledged.

Brian Boydell: Mosaics and Sketches (tudublin.ie)
https://soundcloud.com/cliona_doris/sets/brian-boydell-mosaics-and-sketches

Draíocht: Michael Rooney & June McCormack | Tobar an Cheoil (2022)
Available at www.draiochtmusic.com



Tobar an Cheoil is the third collaborative album by Monaghan-born harper Michael Rooney and Sligo-born flutist June McCormack, having previously released *Land's End* in 2006 and *Draíocht* in 2004. Both players have substantial musical credentials. Together as 'Draíocht', they have toured extensively, throughout the States, Europe, Australia and New

Zealand. Their duet playing is outstanding, rich, melodic and subtle, with a unique blend of harp and flute. They have already achieved great things individually, including major awards and two acclaimed recordings.

With over 55 minutes of music, *Tobar an Cheoil* offers a fourteen-track album with a difference, a mixture of traditional tunes and features twelve of Michael's original compositions. The album has an unusual variety of tunes, incorporating several reel and jig sets, in addition to newly composed hop-jigs, slip jigs, a number of airs and planxties by Michael. The album features a number of guest musicians, including Jack Warnock on guitar, Maria Ryan and Lucia Mac Partlin on violins, Aoife Burke on cello and Seamie O'Dowd on guitar.

3 on the Bund | Frenzy (2022)

Available at www.3onthebund.com



Songs and tunes from a quartet of musicians whose paths crossed while attending the Irish World Academy at the University of Limerick. The band, which includes Aisling Lyons (harp

and concertina), Seán Kelliher (guitar, banjo, mandolin), Rebecca McCarthy Kent (fiddle, viola, keys) and Simon Pfisterer (uilleann pipes, whistles) are joined by guest artists Róisín Ryan (vocals), Trevor Hutchinson (double bass) and Dermot Sheedy (bodhrán).

Trio Anima | Between Earth and Sea

(2022)



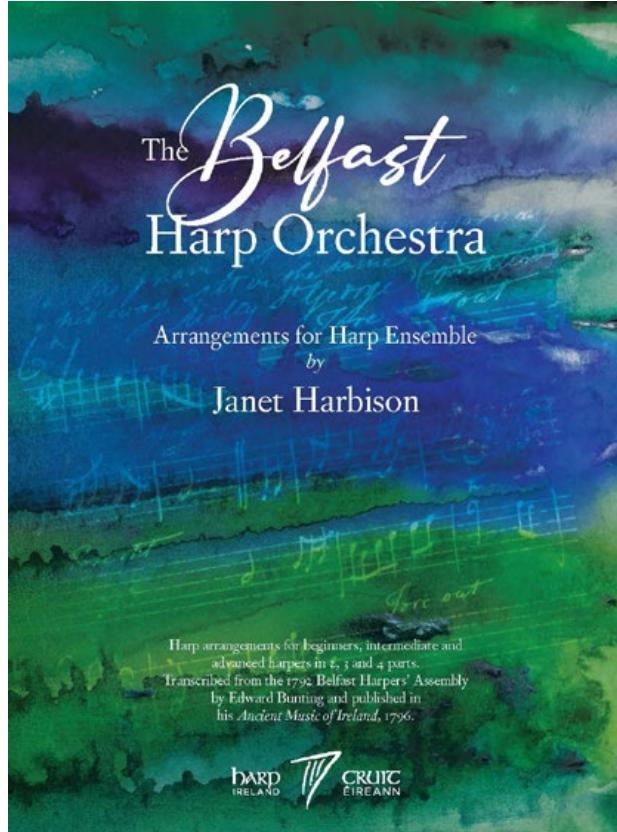
Trio Anima (Anneke Hodnett, harp; Rosalind Ventris, viola; and Matthew Featherstone, flute) have released a new CD of music for flute, viola and harp. It features Anne-Marie O'Farrell's new contemporary setting of the beautiful Limerick air, 'Slán le Máigh', to acknowledge Anneke's Limerick roots. The album and more information is available at www.tycerdd.org/trio-anima

New Releases

Harp Publications

Janet Harbison | The Belfast Harp Orchestra - Arrangements for Harp Ensemble (2022)

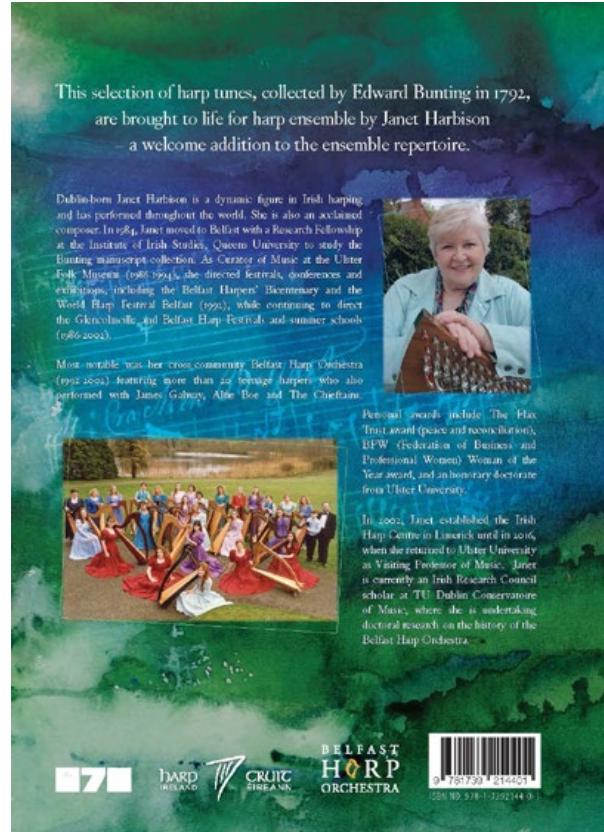
Available at www.janetharbisonharp.com/shop/



Harp arrangements for beginners, intermediate and advanced harpers in 2, 3 and 4 parts. This selection of harp tunes, collected by Edward Bunting in 1792, are brought to life for harp ensemble by Janet Harbison – a welcome addition to the ensemble repertoire.

Ensemble arrangements include: 'An Róise Bheag Mhodhamhar', 'Hugh Kelly', 'Tombó agus Eiriú',

'An Cailín Donn', 'Thugamar Féin an Samhradh Linn', 'Oscail an Doras Go Ciúin Ó', 'Planxty Johnston', 'The Adventurous Rake', 'Molly Mac Alpin' and 'Carolan's Concerto'.

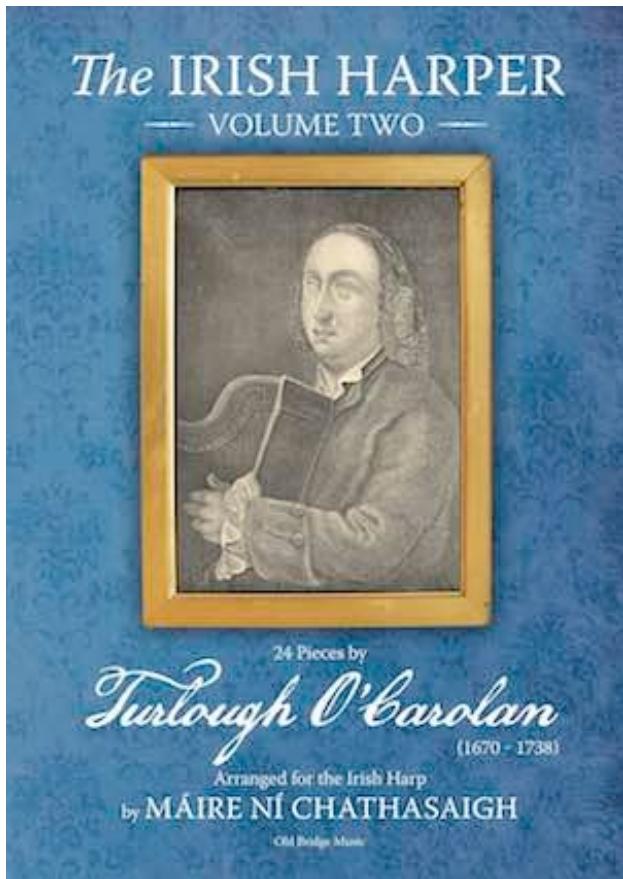


Máire Ní Chathasaigh | The Irish Harper – Volume Two – 24 Pieces by Turlough O'Carolan (1670–1738) (2022)

Available at www.oldbridgemusic.com

Arranged for the Irish Harp by Máire Ní Chathasaigh (Old Bridge Music, July 2022)

This is a new edition of Irish harper Máire Ní Chathasaigh's arrangements of Carolan



tunes, first published in 2001. This amended and updated edition, which was undertaken during the pandemic lockdown, has a new cover, alternative right hand and left hand parts for some pieces, amendments to notation, and further information and performance guidance. Among the tunes are 'Carolan's Draught', 'Blind Mary', 'The Princess Royal', 'Constantine Maguire', 'Bridget Cruise', 'George Brabazon', 'Madame Judge' and 'Baptist Johnson'. Each tune comes with a note on its background. Pieces 1–24 in the book correspond to tracks 1–24 of her CD *The Carolan Albums* (Old Bridge Music, 1994).

Gráinne Hambly | Don Oíche Úd i mBeithil / That Night in Bethlehem (2022)

Available at <https://grainnehambly.com/product/music-for-harp-ensemble-don-oiche-ud/>

Don Oíche Úd i mBeithil That Night in Bethlehem



Arranged for 2 Harps or Harp Ensemble
by
Gráinne Hambly

For Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland



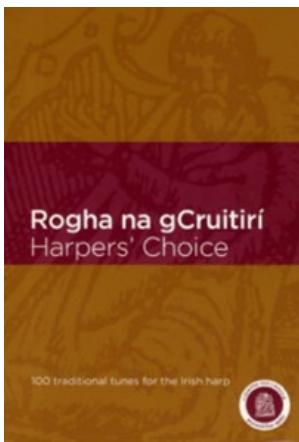
Arranged for harp ensemble by Gráinne Hambly (suitable for 2 harps or harp ensemble), this beautiful Christmas carol is believed to have been composed by the late Seán Óg Ó Tuama from County Cork (although he himself stated the tune was a traditional melody), based on a poem by Aodh Mac Aingil O Cathmhaoil (1571–1626).

It appeared in a book of songs edited by Ó Tuama in the 1950s, *An Chóisir Cheoil*. This arrangement was commissioned in 2020 by Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland, the resource organisation committed to developing and promoting harping in Ireland. Watch a video of the performance of this arrangement at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2vyR67rFd0>

Cairde na Cruite Publications

Available from: www.cairdenacruite.com

Rogha na gCruitirí edited by Áine Ní Dhubhghaill, Anne-Marie O'Farrell and Aibhlín McCrann



100 traditional tunes for the Irish harp contributed by no less than 52 foremost harp players, giving a unique insight into the diverse character and style of Irish harping in the 21st century.

The Irish Harp Book edited by Sheila Larchet Cuthbert

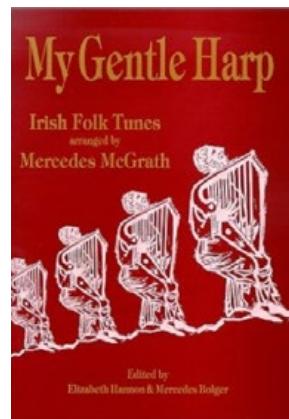


Cairde na Cruite's first publication. A collection of studies and exercises for the use of teachers and pupils of the Irish harp, featuring contributions from leading Irish harpers and composers of the 20th century.

Sounding Harps edited by Mercedes Bolger and Gráinne Yeats

This series consists of four books containing graded music for Irish harp suited to beginners, intermediate, senior, and junior to intermediate students respectively. The *Sounding Harps* series contains traditional tunes - traditional slow airs, songs and dance music arranged by well known exponents of the harp.

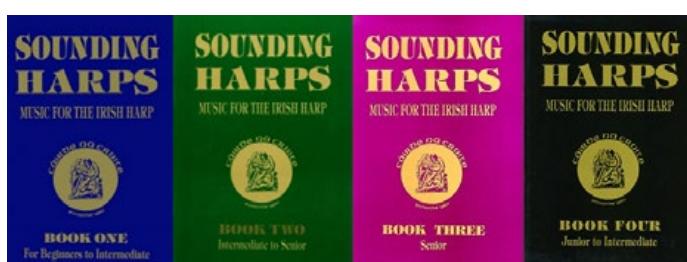
My Gentle Harp edited by Elizabeth Hannon and Mercedes Bolger



A selection of Irish harp solos and duets arranged by Mercedes McGrath, founder-member of Cairde na Cruite.

Masters of the Irish Harp CD (2011)

Produced in association with Cairde na Cruite, this CD released on the RTÉ lyric fm label celebrates the virtuosity of sixteen of our leading harpers playing music ranging from solo harp tunes collected at the Belfast Harp Festival in 1792 right up to compositions created in the 21st century for harp, trumpet and guitar. Artists include Gráinne Hambly, Aibhlín McCrann, Laoise Kelly, Helen Davies, Paul Dooley, Anne-Marie O'Farrell: Siobhán Armstrong, Michelle Mulcahy, Máire Ní Chathasaigh, Kathleen Loughnane, Áine Ní Dhubhghaill, Cormac de Barra, Triona Marshall, Janet Harbison, Dearbhail Finnegan and Gráinne Yeats.



Harp Makers in Ireland

With a view to promoting awareness among harpers, harp organisations and potential harpers of the range of harps and services harp-makers in Ireland provide, *An Cruitire* has included the following list of full-time and part-time harp-makers currently operating in Ireland

HARP MAKER	COMPANY NAME	TYPE OF HARP	LOCATION	CONTACT
Brian Callan	Callan Harps	Lever	Co. Galway	www.callanharp.com facebook.com/callanharp
Pat Cawley & Indra Karklas	Indra's Celtic Harps	Lever	Co. Westmeath	www.indrakarklyte.wixsite.com/indrasharps
Gerard Doheny	Irish Crafted Instruments	Lever	Co. Laois	www.irishcraftedinstruments.ie
Paul Dooley		Early Irish	Co. Clare	www.pauldooley.com
Kevin Harrington	Harrington Instruments	Lever	Co. Cork	www.harringtonharps.ie
Tomás Mac Uilleagóid	Eala Harps	Lever	Co. Dublin	facebook.com/Eala-Harps
Ruairí McCann	Narrow Water Harps	Lever	Co. Louth	http://mccannruairi.wixsite.com/narrow-water-harps
Jan Muyllaert		Lever	Co. Meath	www.irishharps.net
Tim O'Carroll	Killarney Harps	Lever	Co. Kerry	www.killarneyharps.com
Davy Patton	Early Irish Harps	Early Irish	Co. Roscommon	
Seán Smyth	Hollytree Harps	Lever	Co. Dublin	https://www.facebook.com/sean.smyth
Natalie Surina	Ériú Harps	Early Irish Lever	Co. Galway	www.eriuharps.com facebook.com/eriuharps
Brian & Mervyn Waugh	Turmennan Harps	Learner	Co. Down	www.turmennanharps.com
Graham Wright	Graham Wright Violins & Harps	Lever	Co. Mayo	facebook.com/grahamwrightviolinmaker

This list of harp makers is provided to assist people who may wish to procure a harp from one of the many Irish harp makers. Publication of this list is not an endorsement of any harp maker and we cannot vouch for or recommend any one harp maker over another. Harps are expensive instruments and accordingly we urge consumers to proceed with caution and conduct their own due diligence when purchasing an instrument. Accordingly, the principle of caveat emptor should be applied.

Support Cairde na Cruite



We greatly appreciate donations to help support our festival, our regular concerts and our activities. [Click here to donate](#). Harpers can also support the society through our [online shop](#) which features a range of harp music and recordings.

2023 Harp Dates for your Diary

J A N U A R Y

Temple Bar TradFest, 25-29 January

F E B R U A R Y

Remembering Bunting Festival

Féile na Tána, 3-5 February

Scoil Cheoil an Earraigh, 15-19 February

The Gathering Traditional Festival, Killarney, 22 - 25 February

M A R C H

Cairde na Cruite Spring Concert,

Sunday 26th March at 3pm,
Pearse Museum, Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin

Corofin Traditional Festival, Co. Clare, 3-5 March

Feis Ceoil, 20-31 March

A P R I L

Tuamgraney Harp Festival, 1-2 April

Féile Patrick Byrne, 7-9 April

Clifden Traditional Music Festival, 13-16 April

M A Y

Tulla Traditional Music Festival, dates TBC

J U N E

Blas International Summer School of Irish Traditional Music and Dance, 19-30 June

An Chúirt Chruitireachta International Harp Festival -
Sunday 25th - Friday 30th June 2023,
An Grianán, Termonfeckin, Co. Louth
www.harpfestival.ie

J U L Y

Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy, 1-9 July

Scoil na gCláirreach, 7-13 July

South Sligo Summer School

Joe Mooney Summer School, 15-22 July

Meitheal Summer School, 17-21 July

Scoil Acla, 23-29 July

O'Carolan Harp Festival, Keadue, 31 July - 7 August

A U G U S T

Scoil Éigse, 6-11 August

National Heritage Week, 12-20 August

S E P T E M B E R

Dingle TradFest, dates TBC

Culture Night, 22 September

O C T O B E R

Lá na Cruite | Harp Day, 14 October

NOVEMBER

Cairde na Cruite Winter Concert, 26 November, 3pm

Féile Patrick Byrne, dates TBC

William Kennedy Piping Festival, dates TBC

Tionól Harp and Pipes, Music Generation Laois,
dates TBC

International Events:

Edinburgh International Harp Festival, April 2023

Wales International Harp Festival, April 2023

Somerset Folk Harp Festival, July 2023

Harp and Story Festival, Stroud, Gloucestershire,
September/October 2023

Harp on Wight Festival, October/November 2023

DECEMBER

Scoil Gheimhrídh Ghaoth Dobhair,

December 2023 - January 2024



Cairde na Cruite Website

Visit <https://www.cairdenacruite.com/> to stay tuned with all things Cairde na Cruite. There is something that will resonate with everyone – find information on harp hire and upcoming events, visit our online shop, renew your membership, or take a trip down memory lane with videos, photos and previous issues of our newsletter.

Stay Tuned

Follow us on social media to stay up to date with our latest news and events.

You can also stay in the loop by following us on social media or by joining our mailing list.



Facebook: [@CairdeNaCruite](https://www.facebook.com/CairdeNaCruite)



Instagram: [@cairde_na_cruite](https://www.instagram.com/cairde_na_cruite)



Twitter: [@CCIHF](https://twitter.com/CCIHF)

Email: cairdenacruite@gmail.com

Website: www.cairdenacruite.com



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