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CLASSICS

# An Irish Songbook

Ailish Tynan

Iain Burnside

Thomas Dunhill  
Samuel Barber  
Benjamin Britten  
Frank Bridge  
Herbert Howells  
EJ Moeran  
John Cage  
Herbert Hughes

# AN IRISH SONGBOOK

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Total timings: [62.34]

AILISH TYNAN SOPRANO  
IAIN BURNSIDE PIANO

## AN IRISH SONGBOOK

At the end of the nineteenth century there was a growing movement in Ireland which sought to forge a sense of national identity; a sense of self that had become diminished during centuries of English rule. In 1882 a National Literary Society was formed, which aimed to publicise the literature and folklore of Ireland. Two years later the Gaelic Athletic Association appeared, reviving the games that were seen as an intrinsic feature of Irish culture; and in 1893 the Gaelic League was convened, whose objective was in part the revival of the Irish language, which was in apparently terminal decline.

Earlier in the nineteenth century, antiquarians Edward Bunting and George Petrie had begun to gather and publish collections of Irish Airs. During this time Thomas Moore also published his collections of *Irish Melodies*, in which he provided words to be sung to many Irish Airs which had lost their original Gaelic texts. However, in spite of this musical activity it seems to be the literary movement that led to the emergence of a distinctly Celtic impulse.

One of the founder members of the 1882 National Literary Society was the poet William

Butler Yeats, who in 1898, alongside Lady Gregory and Edward Martyn, founded the Irish Literary Theatre, for which Yeats wrote a series of plays based upon Irish mythology, notably around the legendary hero, Cuchulain.

Ireland was not alone in its renaissance, similar revivals were taking place in England also, with the rediscovery of Elizabethan and Tudor literature, drama and music, and a great deal of activity in the collecting of folksong. As in Ireland, this brought a generation of writers and composers who sought to create a purely English identity in the arts, notably breaking away from the dominant Teutonicism in music. However, during the process the Celtic revivalism of the Irish seeped eastwards over the Welsh Marches and into the minds of the English. This happened to such an extent that it is notable that on this album only two of the composers and arrangers represented are in fact Irish: Hamilton Harty and Herbert Hughes, who were born in what in 1921 became Northern Ireland. The remainder are English and American.

Some of this might, at least in part, be due to the work of the Dublin born composer Sir Charles Stanford, whose greatest contribution to music was in the nurturing of so many

composers in his teaching at London's Royal College of Music. Arthur Benjamin recalled his first lesson with Stanford in 1911: 'Hardly was I inside the room when Stanford pointed a finger at me and said: "And what d'ye think of Home Rule, me bhoy"'. Benjamin, fresh from Australia, knew nothing of it and found himself being admonished: 'Well, go home and learn about it, and ye'll be a better composer'. This encouragement, such as it was, wasn't perhaps practised as deeply as might be by Stanford himself. Whilst he set numerous Irish poets and provided accompaniments for many Irish folksongs, notably producing an edition of *Moore's Irish Melodies* in 1895, Arnold Bax accused him of 'never penetrat[ing] to within a thousand miles of the Hidden Ireland'. His were domestic pieces, in thrall to the German tradition, which didn't touch upon the mysticism found in the poetry by those English composers on the Celtic fringe.

Christopher Palmer has attempted to define this deeper Celticism, writing that 'what lies at the root of Celtic mysticism and wonder is the sense of a great loss. [To those] possessed of the Celtic spirit, the material universe appears a symbol of a lost kingdom; and art is an incantation which can restore to a certain extent

that which has been lost'. The restoration of national folklore and, musically, folksong, are therefore key elements of that spirit and a basis for the symbolism they wrought.

Rather than merely introducing this mysticism into their work, as many composers did, a few composers became thoroughly engrossed in this world. In his obituary of E.J. ('Jack') Moeran, Arnold Bax observes that 'During his first thirty years he was an Englishman and a diligent collector of East Anglian folk tunes, whilst for the remainder of his days he was almost exclusively Irish'. The son of an Irish priest serving in Norfolk at the time of Moeran's birth, during the last two decades of his life Jack returned to Ireland regularly, seeking musical inspiration and solace in Kenmare and its surrounding landscape, where he had been accepted as a native by the local people. Moeran observed that he found much similarity between the Norfolk folksong he collected in the first half of his life and that he later collected in County Kerry, the two counties being connected through the Yarmouth fishermen who fished Irish waters and went ashore in poor weather. The three arrangements by Moeran, *The Roving Dingle Boy*, *The Tinker's Daughter* and the haunting setting of *The*

*Lost Lover*, are taken from a set of seven *Songs from County Kerry*. They were arranged towards the end of his life, whilst staying with a tinker family in County Kerry, although he had collected them over a number of years from around that county.

Moeran's *Symphony in G* (1924-37) is seen by some as a work that bridges his Anglo-Irish transition, spiritually. The writing of this work was encouraged by Hamilton Harty, to whom it is dedicated. Harty is represented here with *The Stranger's Grave*, a setting of a poem by Emily Lawless that commemorates a drowned man buried with three unbaptised babies on Inishmaan – one of the Aran Islands off the coast of Galway that also inspired the work of playwright J.M. Synge.

Bax would have seen himself in his description of Moeran, for he too found his spiritual home in Ireland, travelling extensively in the country and returning there annually during his last thirty years. Bax even adopted an Irish pseudonym under which he wrote poetry: Dermot O'Byrne. The 1910 song *To Eire* echoes his longing for Ireland, the text also drawing on much that makes up the Celtic fascination.

Benjamin Britten made numerous folksong arrangements, many of which were written for inclusion in recitals given with Peter Pears. However, Britten's approach to the songs is far from the simple, modal approach adopted by some arrangers. He breathes an extraordinary life into the songs with often economical, highly characterful accompaniments that provide a striking canvas against which the song is somehow cast into sharper relief than might be with a plainer setting. His fourth published volume of arrangements is dedicated to songs from *Moore's Irish Melodies*; from the well known *Last Rose of Summer*, its unsettling accompaniment heightening its evocation of loneliness, to the bell-like tones of *At the mid hour of night* and the purposefulness of *Avenging and Bright*, clamouring for vengeance.

Given Yeats's centrality to the Irish cultural renaissance, it is perhaps unsurprising that his poetry has drawn many English composers, notably in a work that epitomises the English assimilation of the Celtic: Peter Warlock's *The Curlew*. His words frame this recording, in Thomas Dunhill's setting of *The Cloths of Heaven* and Britten's arrangement of what was originally titled by Yeats, 'An Old Song Re-sung', when first published: *Down by the Salley Gardens*.

Yeats noted that the poem was an 'attempt to reconstruct an old song from three lines imperfectly remembered by an old peasant woman in the village of Ballysodare, Sligo, who often sings them to herself'. Those few lines are now known to come from an Anglo-Irish Ballad, *The Rambling Boys of Pleasure*. However, Yeats's poem has in itself become established as a folksong, paired with the Ulster air *The Maids of Mourné Shore*.

This pairing of words and music was first made by Herbert Hughes, as published in his first volume of Irish Country Songs in 1909. Hughes was an important figure in Irish folksong, and was one of the founder members of the Irish Folk Song Society in 1904. He claimed that Irish folk music had 'more variety of mood than can be found in any other in Europe'. Hughes collected hundreds of melodies and published numerous folksong arrangements, his sympathy for which is exemplified in the lively and impatient *Marry me now*.

One of the successors to the Irish Literary Revival was James Joyce, who has become one of the most important figures in modernist avant-garde literature. Born in the same year as Herbert Hughes, the two became firm friends;

a friendship perhaps cemented in music. For a time Joyce performed as a solo tenor, notably performing Hughes's arrangement of *Down by the Salley Gardens* in 1904, and is known to have admired Hughes's *Cradle Song* ('Oh men from the Fields'), from the 1913 set of *Songs of Connacht* to words by Padraic Colum. *Bid Adieu* is based on a poem from Joyce's *Chamber Music* (1907), also with an air by Joyce, for which American composer Edmund Pendleton provided the accompaniment; a song that with a tender eroticism marks the transition into womanhood. Frank Bridge's selection from *Chamber Music, Goldenhair*, drew from him a wonderfully fluid and uncomplicated setting, composed in 1925.

In 1922 the publication of *Ulysses* brought Joyce both fame and notoriety, the book being banned in America for a decade. Hoping to help Joyce's cause, in 1929 Herbert Hughes and Arthur Bliss decided to convene a musical tribute to Joyce: a set of songs based on Joyce's *Pomes Penyeach* (1927), each poem taken by a different composer: *The Joyce Book* (1932). Herbert Howells's setting, *Flood*, supplies the poem with a brooding modal torrent; and that set by C.W. Orr takes its name from the famous street in Leipzig, *Bahnhofstrasse*, where Joyce

spent some of his self-imposed exile from Ireland, and where he was to die in 1941.

Samuel Barber had come to the poetry of Yeats and Joyce whilst exploring his own ancestry, being an American of Scots and Irish origin. In 1952 he fulfilled a dream to visit to Ireland, visiting Yeats's grave in the shadow of Ben Bulbin, only to find it surrounded by the graves of numerous Barbers – perhaps his own ancestors. Shortly afterwards he started work on a set of ten *Hermit Songs*: settings of medieval Irish poems that had been written as annotations in the margins of manuscripts that were being illuminated or copied by scholars or monks, finding the poems 'direct, unspoiled and often curiously contemporaneous in feeling'. The two heard here, *St. Ita's Vision* and *The Desire for Hermitage*, present us with an ecstatic vision of the nursing of the Christ child, attributed to St. Ita, and an intense longing for solitude to prepare for death, which journey must be undertaken alone.

Barber's setting of Joyce's *Solitary Hotel*, from his late cycle *Despite and Still*, is a rather tongue-in-cheek affair, and a total contrast to the most recent work on the disc, by fellow American John Cage. For *The wonderful widow*

*of eighteen springs* Cage selected lines from a section of Joyce's experimental *Finnegans Wake* and set them for voice, using just three pitches, and closed piano. The limited tonal range gives the melody a chant-like feel, which combines with the accompaniment of tapping and knocking on the closed piano lid to create an extraordinarily haunting work.

Philip Lancaster, 2011

## TEXTS

### 1 The Cloths of Heaven

Thomas Dunhill

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,  
Enwrought with golden and silver light,  
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths  
Of night and light and the half-light,  
I would spread the cloths under your feet:  
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;  
I have spread my dreams under your feet;  
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

William Butler Yeats (1865 – 1939)

### 2 Solitary Hotel

Samuel Barber

Solitary hotel in a mountain pass.  
Autumn. Twilight. Fire lit.  
In dark corner young man seated.  
Young woman enters.  
Restless. Solitary. She sits.  
She goes to window. She stands.  
She sits. Twilight. She thinks.  
On solitary hotel paper she writes.  
She thinks. She writes. She sighs.  
Wheels and hoofs. She hurries out.  
He comes from his dark corner.

He seizes solitary paper.  
He holds it towards fire. Twilight.  
He reads. Solitary. What?  
In sloping, upright and backhands:  
Queen's hotel, Queen's hotel, Queen's ho ...

From *Ulysses*, James Joyce (1882 – 1941)

### 3 Goldenhair

Frank Bridge

Lean out of the window,  
Goldenhair,  
I heard you singing  
A merry air.

My book is closed,  
I read no more,  
Watching the fire dance  
On the floor.

I have left my book,  
I have left my room,  
For I heard you singing  
Through the gloom.

Singing and singing  
A merry air,  
Lean out of the window,  
Goldenhair.

From *Chamber Music*, James Joyce

4 **Bid adieu**

arr. Edmund Pendleton

Bid adieu, adieu, adieu,  
Bid adieu to girlish days,  
Happy Love is come to woo  
Thee and woo thy girlish ways —  
The zone that doth become thee fair,  
The snood upon thy yellow hair.

When thou hast heard his name upon  
The bugles of the cherubim  
Begin thou softly to unzone  
Thy girlish bosom unto him  
And softly to undo the snood  
That is the sign of maidenhood.

From *Chamber Music*, Air & Text by James Joyce

5 **The Roving Dingle Boy**

arr. E.J. Moeran

From the Dingle Bay he sailed away  
All in the month of May  
His true love she stood waving  
While waiting on the quay  
His true love she stood waving  
So bitterly she cried  
Said "He's gone and God be with him  
He's my roving Dingle boy."

Then the sails were hoist and the flag was flown  
And the ship began to move  
Just as the anchor it was clear  
She cried these words I prove:  
"A maid, a maid, I'll always stay  
Until the day I die,  
For there is no other one for me  
But my roving Dingle boy."

Now he'd gone away past six months clear  
When a letter he sent home  
Enquiring all about his friends  
And the girl he left alone  
He sent her home the passage paid  
To comfort all her joy  
And she's now in Philadelphia  
With her roving Dingle boy.

Come all you maids and maidens fair  
The warning take mine here  
Never slight your own true love  
When he is on the sea  
Be sure to him, prove constant  
And he's bound to crown your joy  
And carry you towards the city  
Like my roving Dingle boy.

Trad.

6 **To Eire**

Arnold Bax

To Thee, Beloved, of old there came  
The sailors of a thousand ships  
Who learned to love Thy hidden name,  
And love the music on Thy lips;

But some, who thought to build Thy pyre  
And on its ruin rear a throne,  
Have loved to sit around Thy fire  
And count Thy saddest songs their own;

And sons of Thine, who broke love's bands  
To seek a fabled far-off shore,  
Grope thro' the world with aching hands,  
And hunger for Thee evermore;

For, tho' Thy sorrow may not cease,  
Tho', blessing, Thou are still unblest,  
Thou has for men a Gift of Peace,  
O Daughter of Divine Unrest!

James Henry Cousins (1873 – 1956)

7 **The Last Rose of Summer**

arr. Benjamin Britten

'Tis the last rose of summer,  
Left blooming alone;

All her lovely companions  
Are faded and gone;  
No flow'r of her kindred,  
No rosebud is nigh  
To reflect back her blushes,  
Or give sigh for sigh.

I'll not leave thee, thou lone one,  
To pine on the stem;  
Since the lovely are sleeping,  
Go, sleep thou with them;  
Thus kindly I scatter  
Thy leaves o'er thy bed,  
Where thy mates of the garden  
Lie scentless and dead.

So soon may I follow,  
When friendships decay,  
And from Love's shining circle  
The gems drop away!  
When true hearts lie wither'd,  
And fond ones are flown,  
Oh! who would inhabit  
This bleak world alone?

From *Irish Melodies*, Thomas Moore (1779 – 1852)

**8 The Tinker's Daughter**

arr. E.J. Moeran

If you're a tinker's daughter as I took you for to be,  
Will you ride up to Kilgarvan, making buckets there  
for me?

*With my gumshilla an' a goushilla an' me gashilla  
like a Leary-O,  
With my goushilla an' me gumshilla, wallop it out  
my hero.*

Before we went to Kenmare we hadn't this nor that;  
But now the fair is over we've a piebald and a flat.  
*With my gumshilla ...*

I soldered in the stable and I soldered in the hall;  
The children in the kitchen threw away my tools  
and all.  
*With my gumshilla ...*

Sure I can make a bucket or I can make a pint;  
I can do a job of tinker's work the darkest hours of night.  
*With my gumshilla ...*

I'll pull out my pony and I'll try to make a swap;  
I'll catch a tinker's daughter and I'll catch her on  
the hop.  
*With my gumshilla ...*

Trad.

**9 The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs**

John Cage

night by silentsailing night ...  
Isobel ...  
wildwoods' eyes and primarose hair,  
quietly,  
all the woods so wild, in mauves of  
moss and daphnedews,  
how all so still she lay neath of the  
whitethorn, child of tree,  
like some losthappy leaf,  
like blowing flower stilled,  
as fain would she anon,  
for soon again 'twil be,  
win me, woo me, wed me,  
ah weary me!  
deeply,  
Now evencaim lay sleeping; night  
Isobel  
Sister Isobel  
Saintette Isobel  
madame Isa  
Veuve La belle

From *Finnegans Wake*, James Joyce

**10 Flood**

Herbert Howells

Goldbrown upon the sated flood  
The rockvine clusters lift and sway;  
Vast wings above the lambent waters brood  
Of sullen day.

A waste of waters ruthlessly  
Sways and uplifts its weedy mane  
Where brooding day stares down upon the sea  
In dull disdain.

Uplift and sway, O golden vine,  
Your clustered fruits to love's full flood,  
Lambent and vast and ruthless as is thine  
Incertitude!

From *Pomes Penyeach*, James Joyce

**11 Bahnhofstrasse**

C.W. Orr

The eyes that mock me sign the way  
Whereto I pass at eve of day.

Grey way whose violet signals are  
The trysting and the twining star.

Ah star of evil! star of pain!  
Highhearted youth comes not again

Nor old heart's wisdom yet to know  
The signs that mock me as I go.

From *Pomes Penyeach*, James Joyce

**12 Marry Me Now**

arr. Herbert Hughes

Said brawny Bill, the sailor bold,  
O marry me now!  
Our love is nearly two days old,  
Marry me, marry me now!  
I've got the parson and the ring,  
I mean to do the proper thing;  
Marry me now!

You see I've got to sail away,  
O marry me now!  
I'd hate to miss our wedding day;  
Marry me, marry me now!  
For life is short and love is long,  
And once we're spliced we can't go wrong;  
Marry me now!

Heave to, my lass and strike your sail,  
O marry me now!  
A sailor lad will never fail,

Marry me, marry me now!  
You may not see him once a year,  
But when he's there he'll make good cheer:  
Marry me now!

James Bernard Fagan

**13 | The Lost Lover**  
arr. E.J. Moeran

The summer is coming and the grass is green,  
And the leaves are budding on every tree;  
The ships are sailing upon the sea,  
And I'll soon have tidings of my own Johnneen.

The night was stormy and dark and cold,  
When I lost my darling, my true love bold;  
I'll range the valleys and the mountains high,  
And I'll never marry until I die.

O Johnny, Johnny I love you well,  
I love you better than tongue can tell;  
I love my friends and relations too,  
But I'd leave them all, love, and go with you.

Trad.

**14 | Avenging and Bright**  
arr. Benjamin Britten

Avenging and bright fall the swift sword of Erin  
On him who the brave sons of Usna betray'd! –  
For every fond eye he hath waken'd a tear in  
A drop from his heart-wounds shall weep o'er  
her blade.

By the red cloud that hung over Conor's dark  
dwelling,  
When Ulad's three champions lay sleeping in gore –  
By the billows of war, which so often, high swelling,  
Have wafted these heroes to victory's shore –

We swear to avenge them! – no joy shall be tasted,  
The harp shall be silent, the maiden unwed,  
Our halls shall be mute, and our fields shall lie  
wasted,  
Till vengeance is wreak'd on the murderer's head.

Yes, monarch! though sweet are our home  
recollections,  
Though sweet are the tears that from tenderness fall;  
Though sweet are our friendships, our hopes,  
our affections,  
Revenge on a tyrant is sweetest of all!

From *Irish Melodies*, Thomas Moore

**15 | Oh Men from the Fields**  
arr. Herbert Hughes

O men from the fields,  
Come gently within,  
Tread softly, softly,  
O men, coming in...

For m'mhurnin is going  
From me and from you  
Where Mary will fold him  
With mantle of blue,

From reek of the smoke  
And cold of the floor  
And peering of things  
Across the half-door.

O men from the fields,  
Softly, softly come through;  
Mary puts round him  
Her mantle of blue.

Padraic Colum (1881 – 1972)

**16 | St Ita's Vision**  
Samuel Barber

"I will take nothing from my Lord," said she,  
"unless He gives me His Son from Heaven  
In the form of a Baby that I may nurse Him".  
So that Christ came down to her  
in the form of a Baby and then she said:  
"Infant Jesus, at my breast,  
Nothing in this world is true  
Save, O tiny nursing, You.  
Infant Jesus at my breast,  
By my heart every night,  
You I nurse are not a churl  
But were begot on Mary the Jewess  
By Heaven's light.  
Infant Jesus at my breast,  
What King is there but You who could  
Give everlasting good?  
Wherefore I give my food.  
Sing to Him, maidens, sing your best!  
There is none that has such right  
To your song as Heaven's King  
Who every night  
Is Infant Jesus at my breast".

Based on 8th–9th century text

Translation by Chester Kallman (1921 – 1975)



**17 The Minstrel Boy**  
arr. Benjamin Britten

The Minstrel Boy to the war is gone  
In the ranks of death you'll find him;  
His father's sword he has girded on,  
And his wild harp slung behind him.  
"Land of Song", said the warrior bard,  
"Tho' all the world betrays thee,  
One sword, at least, this rights shall guard,  
One faithful harp shall praise thee".

The Minstrel fell! but the foeman's chain  
Could not bring that proud soul under,  
The harp he lov'd ne'er spoke again,  
For he tore its chords asunder;  
And said, "No chains shall sully thee,  
Thou soul of love and brav'ry!  
Thy songs were made for the pure and free,  
They shall never sound in slav'ry".

From *Irish Melodies*, Thomas Moore

**18 Tutto è Sciolto**  
John Ireland

A birdless heaven, seadusk, one lone star  
Piercing the west,  
As thou, fond heart, love's time, so faint, so far,  
Rememberest.

The clear young eyes' soft look, the candid brow,  
The fragrant hair,  
Falling as through the silence falleth now  
Dusk of the air.

Why then, remembering those shy  
Sweet lures, repine  
When the dear love she yielded with a sigh  
Was all but thine?

From *Pomes Penyeach*, James Joyce

**19 The Stranger's Grave**  
Herbert Hamilton Harty

*Little feet too young and soft to walk,  
Little lips too young and pure to talk,  
Little faded grass-tufts, root and stalk.*

I lie alone here, utterly alone,  
Amid pure ashes my wild ashes mingle;  
A drowned man, with a name unknown,  
A drifting waif, flung by the drifting shingle.  
Oh, plotting brain and restless heart of mine,  
What strange fate brought you to so strange a shrine?

Sometimes a woman comes across the grass,  
Bare-footed, with pit-patterings scarcely heard,  
Sometimes the grazing cattle slowly pass,  
Or on my turf sings loud some mating bird.

Oh, plotting brain and restless heart of mine,  
What strange fate brought you to so strange a shrine?

*Little feet too young and soft to walk,  
Little lips too young and pure to talk,  
Little faded grass-tufts, root and stalk.*

Emily Lawless (1845 – 1913)

**20 Sail on, sail on**  
arr. Benjamin Britten

Sail on, sail on, thou fearless bark,  
Wherever blows the welcome wind;  
It cannot lead to scenes more dark,  
More sad than those we leave behind.  
Each smiling billow seems to say  
"Though death beneath our surface be,  
Less cold we are, less false than they,  
Whose smiling wrecked thy hopes and thee."

Sail on, sail on, through endless space,  
Through calm, through tempest, stop no more;  
The stormiest sea's a resting-place  
To him who leaves such hearts on shore.  
Or, if some desert land we meet,  
Where never yet false-hearted men  
Profaned a world, that else were sweet,  
Then rest thee, bark, but not till then.

From *Irish Melodies*, Thomas Moore

**21 The Desire for Hermitage**  
Samuel Barber

Ah! To be all alone in a little cell  
with nobody near me;  
beloved that pilgrimage before the last pilgrimage  
to death.  
Singing the passing hours to cloudy Heaven;  
Feeding upon dry bread and water from the cold  
spring.

That will be an end to evil when I am alone  
in a lovely little corner among tombs  
far from the houses of the great.  
Ah! To be all alone in a little cell,  
Alone I came into the world  
alone I shall go from it.

Based on 8th–9th century text

Translation by Seán Ó Faoláin (1900 – 1991)

**22 At the mid hour of night**  
arr. Benjamin Britten

At the mid hour of night, when stars are  
weeping, I fly  
To the lone vale we loved, when life shone  
warm in thine eye;  
And I think oft, if spirits can steal from the  
regions of air  
To revisit past scenes of delight, thou wilt

come to me there,  
And tell me our love is remember'd even in  
the sky.

Then I sing the wild song it once was rapture  
to hear,  
When our voices commingling breathed like one  
on the ear;  
And as Echo far off through the vale my sad  
orison rolls,  
I think, O my love! 'tis thy voice from the  
Kingdom of Souls  
Faintly answering still the notes that once were  
so dear.

From *Irish Melodies*, Thomas Moore

**23 The Salley Gardens**  
arr. Benjamin Britten

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

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

William Butler Yeats

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## BIOGRAPHIES

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### AILISH TYNAN

*“Tynan is one of our brightest young stars - a shining lyric soprano equally at home in the rarefied world of song as she is in opera”*  
The Independent

Ailish Tynan was born in Mullingar, Ireland, and studied at Trinity College, the Royal Irish

Academy of Music in Dublin and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London. She won the Rosenblatt Recital Prize at the 2003 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. Other awards include the Maggie Teyte Competition, Miriam Licette Award and the RTÉ Millennium Singer of the Future.



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Her recent opera engagements have included her highly acclaimed company and role debuts of Héro *Béatrice et Bénédicte* for Houston Grand Opera and later for Opéra Comique, Sophie *Der Rosenkavalier*, Nanetta *Falstaff* and Atalanta *Xerxes* for the Royal Swedish Opera, Miss Wordsworth *Albert Herring* for Opéra Comique and Opéra de Rouen, and Vixen *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Grange Park Opera. Whilst at the Young Artist Programme of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, she performed Papagena *Die Zauberflöte*, First Niece *Peter Grimes*, Xenia *Boris Godunov*, Second Wood Nymph *Rusalka* and Woodbird *Siegfried*. Later she returned to sing Marzelline *Fidelio* under Antonio Pappano. She also sang Zerlina *Don Giovanni* for the Seattle Opera as her US opera debut, Valencienne *The Merry Widow* and Susanna *Le nozze di Figaro* for Welsh National Opera, Euridice *Orfeo ed Euridice* and Pamina *Die Zauberflöte* for Opera Ireland.

Greatly in demand on the concert platform, Ailish works frequently with British and international orchestras. Her recent highlights include the opening night of the BBC Proms with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Jirí Belohlávek, Ludwigsburger Festspiele and concert tour with Michael Hofstetter, *Messiah* with the Academy of Ancient Music and the King's College Choir

in Cambridge, Mahler Symphony No.8 with the London Symphony Orchestra under Valery Gergiev, Haydn *The Creation* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Andris Nelsons, *The Seasons* in Madrid with Harry Christophers, *Nelson's Mass* with the RTÉ under Douglas Boyd, Vaughan Williams *Hodie* at the Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and Mahler Symphony No.2 at the Three Choirs Festival with Philharmonia under Jac van Steen. In recitals, Ailish has collaborated with Malcolm Martineau, Graham Johnson, Julius Drake, Iain Burnside, Roger Vignoles, Chris Glynn and Barry Douglas, giving recitals at the Wigmore Hall, Edinburgh International Festival, City of London Festival, Cheltenham Music Festival, West Cork Music Festival, Music for Galway LSO St. Luke's and St John's Smith Square, London. As a former BBC New Generation Artist, she is frequently heard on BBC Radio 3. Her latest discography includes Gluck arias with Classical Opera Company for Wigmore Live, *Irish Songs* by Herbert Hughes for Signum Classics and Muriel Herbert songs for Linn Records. She recently finished recording Fauré songs with Iain and Poulenc songs with Graham Johnson.

## IAIN BURNSIDE

Iain Burnside enjoys a unique reputation as pianist and broadcaster, forged through his commitment to the song repertoire and his collaborations with leading international singers. In recent seasons such artists have included Galina Gorchakova, Ailish Tynan, Lisa Milne, Rebecca Evans; Susan Bickley, Ann Murray and Sarah Connolly; John Mark Ainsley, Mark Padmore and Andrew Kennedy; Roderick Williams and Bryn Terfel. Through his strong association with the Rosenblatt Recital Series Iain has

appeared with outstanding artists such as Ekaterina Siurina, Ailyn Perez, Lawrence Brownlee, Stephen Costello and Matthew Rose.

His recording portfolio reflects his passion for British music. For Signum he has recorded Tippett (Ainsley,) Judith Weir (Tynan/Bickley/Kennedy), FG Scott (Milne/Williams) and Herbert Hughes (Tynan), as well as works from beyond the British Isles by Beethoven (Murray/Williams/Ainsley), Korngold (Connolly/Dazeley) and Liszt



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(Evans/Kennedy/Rose), nominated for a BBC Music Magazine award. Naxos CDs include the complete songs of Gerald Finzi (Ainsley/Williams), together with Vaughan Williams, Ireland and Gurney. For NMC he has recorded Richard Rodney Bennett and The NMC Songbook (Gramophone Award).

Acclaimed as a programmer, Iain has devised a number of innovative recitals combining music and poetry presented with huge success in Brussels and Barcelona with the collaboration of actors such as Fiona Shaw and Simon Russell Beale. At the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, he is Research Associate, staging specially conceived programmes with student singers and pianists. He has given masterclasses throughout Europe, at New York's Juilliard School and the Banff Centre, Canada. Iain's broadcasting career covers both radio and TV and has been honoured with a Sony Radio Award.

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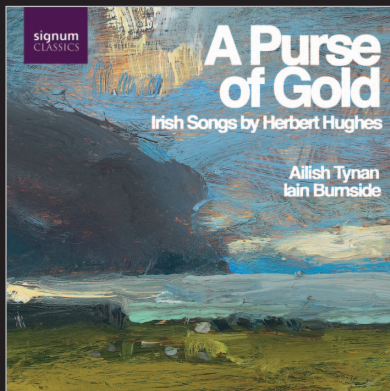
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**A Purse of Gold: Irish Songs by Herbert Hughes**  
Ailish Tynan  
Iain Burnside

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*"The word 'arrangement' as Burnside suggests, doesn't do justice to the inventive piano writing and pacing of so many of these pieces ... Soprano Ailish Tynan's feeling for the musical idiom and, above all, the poetry of her countrymen, matched by Burnside's delightfully poetic pianism, prove irresistible. Highly recommended"*

**Classic FM**