

Galway Early Music Festival 21.05.21

The Irish Consort

Dir. Siobhán Armstrong

SAINTS, KINGS AND HEROES

Three hundred years of music across cultures in Ireland

Singers:	Róisín O’Grady and Róisín Elsafty
Treble viol:	Sarah Groser
Bass viol:	Malachy Robinson and Ed Tapceanu
Whistles:	Ronan Browne
Early Irish and European Renaissance Harp :	Siobhán Armstrong

An ancient Irish harp prelude.....	Pre-1600. Field transcription (1790s)
Hanc de Britania.....	Pre-1500. St. Canice’s Cathedral, Kilkenny MS
Ghabham molta Bhríde.....	Melody: medieval plainchant Lyrics: Oral tradition
Thugamar féin an samhradh linn	Pre-1600. Field transcription (1790s)
O’Sullivan’s March / Séamus an Chaca.....	Pre-1700. Oral tradition
Whip of Dunboyne	Matthew Holmes’s lute book (1600-5)
Sorrow, sorrow stay	John Dowland (1563—1626)
Calen o custure me... Melody: The Ballet lute book companion (c.1590) Lyrics: A Handful of Pleasant Delights (1584)	
Callinocasturame	William Byrd (1539/40—1623)
Sir John Packington's Pavin	Cormac MacDermott (ante 1575—1618)
Almane Mr. Cormake	
Though Amaryllis dance in green	William Byrd
Liliburlero or The New Irish Tune	Henry Purcell (1659—1695)
King James’s March to Ireland	Leyden MS (1695) & Sinkler MS (1710)
Limerick’s Lamentation.....	Pre-1700. Oral tradition
Slán chum Pádraic Sáirséal... Melody: A collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes (1724) Lyrics: John O’Daly (1850)	
The poor Irish boy.....	Oral tradition, noted by G.F. Handel (1741)
Let me wander not unseen	George Frideric Handel (1685—1759)
Marbhna Thoirdealbhagh Mhic Dhonnchadha.....	?Turlough Carolan (1670—1738)

PROGRAMME NOTES

Directed by harpist and academic, Siobhán Armstrong, *The Irish Consort* is a unique ensemble that fuses the passion and talent of some of Europe's finest early music performers with that of prize-winning, traditional Irish musicians and singers, exploring the intersection of Irish and European early music.

Their 2021 GEM programme – *Saints, Heroes & Kings* – explores Ireland's cultural position, in the early modern period, as an English colony, ruled by English monarchs, with periodic struggles for self-determination unsuccessful until the early twentieth century. It includes some of the earliest extant Irish music: monastic plainchant; ancient Irish harp compositions; 16th-century Irish songs and dances, together with music familiar to the Elizabethan colonists: lute songs by John Dowland, lively consort music by William Byrd, and European Renaissance dances composed by Cormac McDermott, a royal Irish harper at the English court. The music of the later colonial period includes Irish airs that travelled to Britain together with 17th- and 18th-century elegies for Irish heroes who fought in the Jacobite wars struggling over the British throne, King James II of England and King William of Orange.

An ancient Irish harp prelude

Hanc de Britania

Ghabham Molta Bhríde

A late-medieval Irish harp prelude collected in the 1790s, a plainchant antiphon for St. Brigit from a 15th-century Kilkenny Cathedral MS, and an oral-tradition praise song for St. Brigit set to a medieval plainchant melody.

Thugamar féin an samhradh linn

One of the oldest surviving Irish songs, at least pre-1600. Collected from an Irish harper in the 1790s.

O'Sullivan's March

Séamus an Chaca

Whip of Dunboyne

Sorrow, sorrow stay

Oral-tradition, Irish marches pre-1700, the second referencing King James II's abandonment of the Irish at the Battle of the Boyne; a rare pre-1600 Irish jig surviving in an English lute MS, and a lute song by John Dowland (1563–1626), of the kind that aristocratic Tudor colonists in Ireland would have sung.

Calen o custure me

Callinocasturame

Cailín o chois tSúaire mé ['I am a girl from the Banks of the river Suir'] is the earliest Irish song air to be referenced outside Ireland. Performed here with its English words from the 1580s, and with 'divisions' (variations) on the same song, composed by one of the most famous Renaissance English composers, William Byrd (c.1540–1623).

Sir John Packington's Pavin

Almane Mr. Cormacke

Three-part consort compositions by the first royal Irish harper at the English court – employed by Queen Elizabeth 1st in 1602 – Cormacke MacDermott. This is the earliest music composed in a European idiom by an Irish composer.

Though Amaryllis dance in green

A consort song by William Byrd of the kind that aristocratic Tudor colonists in Ireland would have sung.

Liliburlero

King James's March to Ireland

Limerick's Lamentation

Slán chum Pádraic Sáirséal

Liliburlero or *The New Irish Tune* by 'the English Orpheus', Henry Purcell (1659–1695) became the tune for ballads strongly associated with King William of Orange. *King James's March to Ireland* references his foe, the

deposed Catholic English king. Under its more common Irish name – *Limerick's Lamentation* – it commemorates the ultimate failure of the Jacobite cause in 1691, the routing of James's forces, and the capitulation of Limerick at the end of the war. The surrender was skillfully negotiated by the heroic earl of Lucan, Patrick Sarsfield, (Pádraic Sáirséal). Sarsfield saved the lives of 10,000 Jacobite soldiers, who left Ireland with him in 'the flight of the wild geese' but this Irish hero died only two years later fighting for the French king, Louis XIV, and is commemorated in this vocal lament.

Der arme irische Junge

Let me wander not unseen

Marbhna Thoirdealbhaigh Mhic Dhonnchadha

We end the programme in the 18th century with another elegy, for a survivor of the Williamite Wars, Counsellor Turlough Óg Mac Donough, who fought for King James but who lived until 1713; a poet, parliamentarian, lawyer and patron of the arts, greatly mourned on his death. Before that, a taste of Europe in Dublin with an aria from Handel's first big Dublin hit in 1741, on his two-year visit. This was the party piece of one of the harpers, Dominic Mungan (c.1715–1770s). It is preceded by an Irish tune that Handel heard and transcribed onto a MS page of his famous oratorio, Messiah, which he was writing in Dublin, where he lived, in Abbey St., in 1741.

Siobhán Armstrong

TEXTS

Hanc de Britania

*Hanc de Britania
presules predicant;
eius natalia
magi ma[g]nificant;
hanc luminaria
celi pro[g]noscant.*

Bishops from Britain
Prophesy about her;
Wise men
Glorify her birth;
Heaven's lights foretell her.

*Nam globus igneus,
splendor ethereus,
sanctam notificant.*

Indeed, a fiery globe,
an ethereal splendour,
announce the Saint.

Gabham Molta Bríde

*Gabhaim molta Bríde
Ionmhain í le hÉirinn
Ionmhain le gach tír í
Molaimis go léir í*

I am praising Bridget
Who is daughter of Ireland
She is a daughter of all countries
We all praise her

*Lóchrann geal na Laighneach
A' soilsíú feadh na tíre
Cean ar óghaibh Éireann
Ceann na mban ar míne*

The bright light of Leinster
Bringing light to the country
The leader of the youth of Ireland
Our leader of gentlewomen

*Tig an geimhreadh dian dubh
A' gearradh lena ghéire
Ach ar Lá 'le Bríde
Gar dúinn earrach Éireann*

Here comes the dark, hard winter
Cutting with its sharpness
But on St. Bridget's Day
Ireland's spring is close by

Thugamar féin an samhradh linn

*Bábóg na Bealtaine, maighdean an t-samhraidh,
Suas gach cnoc, is síos gach gleann;
Cailíní maiseacha bán-gheala gléasta,
Is thugamar féin an samhradh linn.*

Loimneóg:

*Samhradh buidhe na neoinín glé-geal,
Is thugamar féin an samhradh linn,
Ó bhaile go baile, is ‘un ár mbaile na dhiaidh sin -
Is thugamar féin an samhradh linn.*

*Tá an fhuisseóg ag seinm, is ag luasgadh 'sna spéirthibh,
Beachaí, is cuileógaí, is blátha ar na crainn;
Tá 'n chuach 's na h-éanlaith ag seinm le pléisiúr,
Is thugamar féin an samhradh linn. .*

*Tá nead ag an ghearfhiadh ar imeall na h-aile,
Is nead ag an chuir-éisg i ngéagaibh anchrainn;
Tá mil ar na cuiseogaibh, is na cuilm ag béiceadh,
Is thugamar féin an samhradh linn.*

*Tá an ghrian ag soillsigh, is ag gealladh na dtabhartas;
Tá an fhairge mar sgáthán ag maoth-gháiridhe do'n ghlinn
Tá na madaidh ag péithriughadh, is an t-eallach ag géimnigh,
Is thugamar féin an samhradh linn.*

Mayday doll, maiden of summer,
Up every hill and down every glen.
Comely girls, dressed in bright white,
And we brought the summer with us.

Chorus:

Yellow summer of the snow-white daisies,
And we brought the summer with us,
From place to place, and home afterwards,
And we brought the summer with us.

The skylark is calling and undulating in the sky,
Bees and flies and flowers on the trees.
The cuckoo and the birds are singing with pleasure,
And we brought the summer with us.

The hare has a nest on the edge of the cliff,
And a nest for the heron in the branch of the tree,
There is honey on the reeds and the doves calling,
And we brought the summer with us.

The sun is shining and promising gifts,
The sea is a mirror tenderly smiling on the glen,
The dogs are barking and the cattle are lowing,
And we brought the summer with us.

Lyrics: Énrí Ó Muirgheasa. *Dha Chéad de Cheoltaibh Uladh* 1915

Sorrow, Sorrow stay

*Sorrow sorrow stay,
Lend true repentant teares
To a woefull, wretched wight.
Hence, dispaire, with thy tormenting feares:
Doe not, O doe not my heart poore heart affright,
Pitty, help now or never;
Mark me not to endlesse paine.
Alas I am condempned ever,
No hope, no help, ther doth remaine,
But down I fall,
And arise I never shall.*

Calen o custure me

*When as I view your comely grace, calen o custure me,
Your golden hair, your angel's face, calen o custure me.
Your azured veins much like the skies, calen o custure me,
Your silver teeth, your crystal eyes, calen o custure me.
Your voice so sweet, your necke so white, calen o custure me,
Your body fine and small in sight, calen o custure me.
Your fingers long so nimble be, calen o custure me,
To utter forth such harmony, calen o custure me.
So brave, so fine, so trim, so young, calen o custure me,
With heavenly wit and pleasant tongue, calen o custure me.
That Pallas though she did excel, calen o custure me,
Could frame nor tell a tale so well, calen o custure me.
Within my self then can I say, calen o custure me,
The night is gone, behold the day, calen o custure me.
Behold the star so clear and bright, calen o custure me,
As dims the sight of Phoebus' light, calen o custure me.*

Lyrics: *A Handful of Pleasant Delights London 1584 [Modernized]*

Though Amaryllis dance in green

*Though Amarillis daunce in greene,
like Fayrie Queene,
and sing full cleere,
Corina can with smiling cheere :
yet since their eyes make hart so sore,
hey ho, chill* love no more.*

*Ah wanton eyes my friendly foes,
and cause of woes :
your sweet desire,
breedes flames of ice and freese in fire :
yee skorne to see mee weep so sore,
hey ho, chill love no more.*

*Love yee who list I force him not,
Sith God it wot,
the more I wayle,
the lesse my sighes and tears prevaile,
what shall I doe but say therefore,
hey ho, chill love no more.*

Slán chum Pádraic Sáirséal

*A Phádraic Sáirséal, slán go dtí tú !
Ó chuadhais don Fhraic 's do champaidhe gaoilte,
Ag déanamh do ghearáin leis na ríghthe,
'S d'fhág tú Éire 'gus Gaoidheil bhoicht claoidhte,
Och, ochón !*

*A Phádraic Sáirséal, is duine le Dia tú,
Is beannaighthe an talamh ar shuibhail tú riamh air ;
Go mbeannaighthe an ghealach gheal 's an ghrian duit,
Ó thug tú an lá ó lámha Rígh Liam leat.
Och, ochón!*

*A Phádraic Sáirséal, guidhe gach nduine leat,
Mo ghuidhesi féin 's guidhe Mhic Muire leat,
Ó thóigh ú an tÁth Caol ag gabháil tré Bhiorra dhuit
'S gur ag Cuillinn Ó gCuanadh 'buadhag leat Luimneach.
Och, ochón!*

*'Cia súd tall air chnoc Bheinn Éidir ?'
'Saighdiúir bocht mé le Rígh Séamus ;
Do bhí mé anurraig an arm 's an éadach,
Acht táim a mbliaghannadh ag iarraidh déirce.'
Och, ochón!*

*Do cuireadh an chéad bhrise oruinn a droichead na Bóinne,
An dara brise ag droichead na Sláinge,
An trimhúghadh brise an Eachdhrum Uí Cheallaigh,
'S 'Éire chúbhartha, mo chúig céad slán leat !
Och, ochón!*

*Annsúd atá siad, barr uaisle Éirionn,
Diúicidhe, Burcaig, 's mac Rígh Séamus ;
Captaoin Talbóid, croidhe na féile,
'S Pádraic Sáirséal, gradh ban Éirionn.
Och, ochón!*

O Patrick Sarsfield, may you go safely!
Since you went to France with your warcamps broken up,
Making your complaint to the kings,
You have left Ireland and the poor Irish in defeat
O alas!

O Patrick Sarsfield, you are a person favoured of God,
Blessed is any ground that you ever walked upon ;
May the bright moon and the sun bless you,
Since you won the day from the hands of King William.
O alas!

O Patrick Sarsfield, the prayer of everyone be with you
My own prayer and the prayer of the Son of Mary be with you
Since you took Áth Caol as you went through Birr,
And since Limerick was won by you at Cuillinn Ó gCuanadh.
O alas!

Who is that on the hill of Howth?
'I am a poor soldier of King James;
Last year I had weapons and uniform,
But this year I am begging for alms.
O alas!

The first defeat was inflicted on us at the bridge of the Boyne,
The second defeat at the bridge of Slane,
The third defeat in Aughrim belonging to O'Kelly,
And tormented Ireland, my five hundred farewells to you !
O alas!

Yonder [in Europe] they are, the pick of the nobles of Ireland,
Dukes, Bourkes, and the son of King James;
Captain Talbot, the heart of hospitality,
And Patrick Sarsfield, the beloved of the women of Ireland.
O alas!

Marbhna Thoirdealbhaigh Mhic Dhonnchadha

*Óra, shiubhail mé go léor, 's ní shiubhailfead níos mó,
Ó Bhaile Áth Cliath go Gaillimh, is go geataí Dhún Mhór,
Siúd an mheur a raibh an ceól, siúd an ceann a raibh an glór,
Tá an réim so uainnfeasda ó d'eug tú a Thoirdealbhaigh óig.*

Dá mairtheá ins an dún, is tú a sheasfadh ar gclú

*Agus chuirfeá go tapaidh cúis mheangach air gcúl
Dá gchluineadh an rí úr do theasdas nó do chlú
Bheadh sé tinn deacrach ag síleadh na súl.*

*Tá Tighearna Mhuig' Eó 's gach tighearna eile faoi bhrón,
Agus tighearna loch Glinne a' síle na ndeór,
Nach é so an t-ár mór d'fhág Éire faoi bhrón,
Do bhuel deas chuainteach dhul dúinte faoi fhód.*

*Sé do shaoghal nár bhuan d'fhág síansa faoi ghruaim,
I bhfad ó na daoine i gCraobhaigh bu dual
Ó a Mhuire nach í an truagh a's a liachta dilleachtaidh i ngúais
Ó d'imthigh sé, an ard-fhlaithe tá sínte i mbaile an Dúin.*

Oh, I walked enough and I will walk no further,
From Dublin to Galway, and to the gates of Dunmore.
There the finger that had the music; there the head that had the voice,
Your strength is forever lost to us since your death, Turlough Óg.

If you were alive in the big house, it is you who would defend our
honour,
Quickly thwarting every deceitful action,
If the king heard of your achievements or your renown,
He would be sore sick, his eyes weeping.

Lord Mayo and every other lord is sorrowful,
And the Lord of Loch Glin sheds tears.
Isn't this the calamity which has left Ireland in sorrow,
Your lovely, persuasive mouth descending closed under the earth.

It is the passing of your life that has left melody despondent,
Far from the people of Creevagh, which is your rightful place.
O Virgin Mary, is it not a pity and so many orphans in jeopardy
Since he departed, the prince who lies in Ballindoon.