

I AM OF IRELAND / Yeats in Song TRACK SHEET

1. I am of Ireland 3:02

Cathy Jordan -vocals, Seamie O'Dowd -fiddles, guitars, backing vocals, percussion, piano

Cathy Jordan, lead singer of Dervish, and acclaimed musician Seamie O'Dowd collaborated on two songs in their hometown of Sligo during the lockdown. Yeats was fascinated with Irish folklore and this poem is based on a 14th-century fragment. A powerful performance of Yeats' mystical words and Driver's haunting melody.

2. He wishes for the Cloths of Heaven 2:22

John Doyle- vocals, guitar

This is the first Yeats poem to which album composer Ray Driver set music. It's a beautiful, brief and heartbreaking poem, no doubt written for Yeats's long unrequited love focus, the Irish revolutionary Maud Gonne. John Doyle, original member of Solas, gives it a sensitive touch: "Tread softly because you tread on my dreams."

3. The Lake Isle of Innisfree 2:37

Christine Collister vocals, Gabriel Rhodes guitar , Joel Zifkin fiddle , David Gossage whistles

Singer-songwriter Christine Collister, recognized for her work with Richard Thompson, hails from the Isle of Man. On 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree', Yeats's yearning for a rural life, she's backed by American guitarist Gabe Rhodes (Willie Nelson, Emmylou Harris) and Canadian

fiddler Joel Zifkin (Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Richard Thompson). "...I hear it in the deep heart's core"

4. He tells of the Perfect Beauty 3:31

Dave Curley -vocals, guitar, Cillian Vallely-uilleann pipes, low whistle , Trevor Hutchinson-bass , Colin Farrell -fiddle

A love poem given an elegant performance by these master musicians. Dave Curley is a rising young singer and multi-instrumentalist from Galway who has worked with Moya Brennan of Clannad, SLIDE, and Irish 'supergroup' Lúnasa, three of whose members join him on this track.

5. The Falling of the Leaves 2:31

Eleanor Shanley -vocals , Kevin Burke -fiddle , Laura Zaerr-harp
Acclaimed Irish vocalist Eleanor Shanley (De Danaan, Ronnie Drew) imbues a quiet beauty to "Falling of the Leaves," a song of passing time and love, accompanied by Laura Zaerr's ethereal harp. Laura was brought to the project by fellow Oregon resident Kevin Burke.

6. The Wild Swans at Coole 3:16

Fergal McAloon vocals , Niall Hanna guitar

Fergal is lead singer for the Whistlin' Donkeys, a popular No. Ireland folk-rock band. He sings four songs on the album. On this minor key ballad, the poet searches for lasting beauty in a changing world. Fergal is joined here by his neighbor, acclaimed guitarist Niall Hanna.

7. Brown Penny 2:17

Jackie Oates vocals, fiddle , Gabriel Rhodes guitar, accordion , Rick

Richards percussion

Jackie Oates is an English traditional and folk singer and fiddler who early on played with Rachel Unthank's band. She sings three songs on the album including this airy "Brown Penny," exploring the chance nature of love.

8. The Song of Wandering Aengus 3:28

Seamie O'Dowd - vocals, bouzouki, fiddles, whistles

Seamie's gruffly emotive voice conjures this compelling odyssey of a search for a shape-shifting love, accompanied by his own masterful instrumental work.

9. The Two Trees 3:40

Christine Collister vocals, Kevin Burke fiddle , Cal Scott - arranger, bass, guitar, piano

Perhaps signifying the two trees in the Garden of Eden, The Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life, this is one of the longer poems on the album. Christine says, "Ray set this to music for me, after asking which poem spoke to me the most." Burke reunites with his fellow Portland musician Cal Scott for the accompaniment.

10. The Folly of Being Comforted. 3:16

Mick McAuley -vocals, guitars, melodeon, bouzouki, Dana Lyn -violin

Mick McAuley, another Solas alumnus, teams up with New York violinist Dana Lyn on this ballad. The singer's love goes deeper than physical beauty-- his beloved's hair has "threads of gray"-- yet his unrequited heart is not comforted by time. Mick's affecting voice is accompanied by

Dana's gently aching violin.

11. The Pity of Love 2:25

Ashley Davis vocals, Cormac De Barra - harp , Colin Farrell - fiddle, whistles

American Ashley Davis and Dubliner Cormac De Barra have both worked with Clannad's Moya Brennan. With De Barra's harp leading off, Ashley glows on this tiny dark gem about a lover struggling to express themselves.

12. Faery Song (from 'The Land of Heart's Desire') 2:55

Cathy Jordan - vocals, bones, Kevin Burke fiddle, Seamie O'Dowd - guitar, harmonica, mandolin, banjo

A second song with Cathy and Seamie, drawn from a Yeats play steeped in Irish folklore and bewitchment. It's given a lilting tempo and fellow Sligoman Kevin Burke joins in with Cathy keeping time on the bones.

13. When You are Old 2:35

Fergal McAloon vocals, Mick O'Brien uilleann pipes and low whistle, Niall Hanna guitar

Perhaps the earliest of Yeats's great poems, written in his twenties, presumably about Maud Gonne and already envisioning his lifelong unrequited love for her. "One man loved the pilgrim soul in you." With the acclaimed musician Mick O'Brien on low whistle and pipes and Niall Hanna again on guitar.

14. An Irish Airman foresees his Death 3:24

John Doyle - vocals, guitar, Cillian Vallely uilleann pipes

One of Ray Driver's favorite poems, it was written by Yeats in memory of his friend Lady Augusta Gregory, whose young son Major Robert Gregory was killed in action during WWI. It's a beautiful haunting song here with John's immaculate guitar playing and Cillian on whistle and pipes.

15. The White Birds 2:51

Jackie Oates vocals, fiddle , John Spiers melodeon , Jack Rutter bouzouki , Natalie Haas cello

A buoyant waltz with fine accompanists, Natalie Haas (Alasdair Fraser) on cello and John Spiers (Eliza Carthy, Bellowhead) on melodeon.

Another song for Maud Gonne, who once expressed her wish to become a seagull; Yeats perhaps saw it as a desire for freedom from sorrow and time. 'I would that we were, my beloved, white birds on the foam of the sea!'

16. The Lover tells of the Rose in his Heart 3:18

Mick McAuley - vocals, guitars, tin whistle, low whistle, melodeon

Beyond simply a love poem, this touches on a frequent Yeats theme, contrasting two Irelands--an idealized natural Ireland with a harsher modern world.

17. The Mask 2:31

Christine Collister vocals, Gabriel Rhodes - guitar, string arrangement, Danny Levin strings

A brief poem of love and longing on one of Yeats's enduring symbols,

the mask, given a dark mysterious setting with strings.

18. The Ballad of the Foxhunter 3:18

The Ballad of the Foxhunter

Fergal McAloon vocals, Leonard Barry - uilleann pipes, tin whistle,
Seamie O'Dowd - bouzouki, guitar, banjo, backing vocals

An unexpectedly upbeat song of an old man dreaming of a final hunt, it becomes a celebratory wake. With the excellent Kerryman Leonard Barry on pipes.

19. September 1913 3:41

John Doyle vocals, guitar, Cillian Vallely low whistle

John and Cillian join up for another track, this one a powerful song which Doyle now includes in his live concerts. It's Yeats's bittersweet elegy for Ireland and his disdain for middle class greed. "Romantic Ireland's dead and gone."

20. The Cradle Song 1:31

Jackie Oates - vocals, fiddle

Jackie solos on this wistful lullaby with a shadow of foreboding, as a new parent already imagines missing their young child when they are grown.

21. Never give all the Heart 2:02

Dave Curley - vocals, guitar, tenor guitar

A lovely solo by Dave, who is a fine guitarist as well as singer. The poem warns "he that made this knows all the cost, for he gave all his

heart and lost.”

22. Ephemera 3:23

Brid O’Riordan vocals, Derek O’Sullivan guitar, Mick O’Brien low whistle
Track produced by Philip Begley

A poignant song of dying love by a couple in their waning years. Bríd O’Riordan, a traditional singer from Co. Kerry, sings it with a forthright clarity backed by Mick O’Brien’s haunting low whistle. Philip Begley, who is also producing Bríd’s new album, is one of Ireland’s notable engineers (Enya, The Corrs, Paul Brady, Clannad, Mary Black).

23. He tells of a Valley full of Lovers 2:57

Fergal McAloon vocals, Seamie O’Dowd - guitar, fiiddles, mandolin,
Stephen O’Dowd uilleann pipes

This track has the father/son feature of Seamie and Stephen O’Dowd.

24. The Fiddler of Dooney 2:19

Seamie O’Dowd - vocals, bouzouki, fiddle

A fitting close to the album, as Seamie was the first artist to come on board as well as born and raised in Yeats’s Sligo. Seamie’s well-known musician father was even dubbed the ‘Fiddler of Dooney.’ The poem’s setting is an upbeat jig, as a merry old fiddler looks forward to heaven.

Co-produced by Raymond Driver & Paul Marsteller

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