

I AM OF IRELAND: YEATS IN SONG

Rating: ★★★★★

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Album and Artist Details

Artist/band:	VARIOUS ARTISTS
Label:	Merrow Records
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It's been done before and often, but never with such silken, seductive charm as here. Readily lending themselves to music, the poems of Ireland's first Nobel laureate, WB Yeats, receive a limpidly loving, watercolour-delicate treatment in *I Am of Ireland*, featuring 24 new settings by Raymond Driver.

Inked in with the evocative understatement that marks Driver's acclaimed work as an illustrator, what results eloquently conjures the romance, fantasy and nostalgia of Yeats' poetry with more than passing success.

Recorded over three years and as many continents, a crack team of 32 soloists, vocal and instrumental, read like a veritable who's who of Irish folk music. Dervish frontwoman Cathy Jordan, respectively accompanied by singer and multi-instrumentalist Seamie O'Dowd and fiddler Kevin Burke, provides memorable accounts of the title-track and 'Faery Song'. O'Dowd's six contributions include myriad instruments and vocals, notably on the sprightly 'The Fiddler of Dooney'. Eleanor Shanley's 'The Falling of the Leaves' is

poignantly delivered, Jackie Oates is delightfully buoyant on 'Brown Penny', John Doyle quietly devastating in 'He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven'. Some might be unnerved by the ever-present pastel-hued ghosts of Clannad and Enya, but there is much to enjoy and, willingly, wallow in here.

