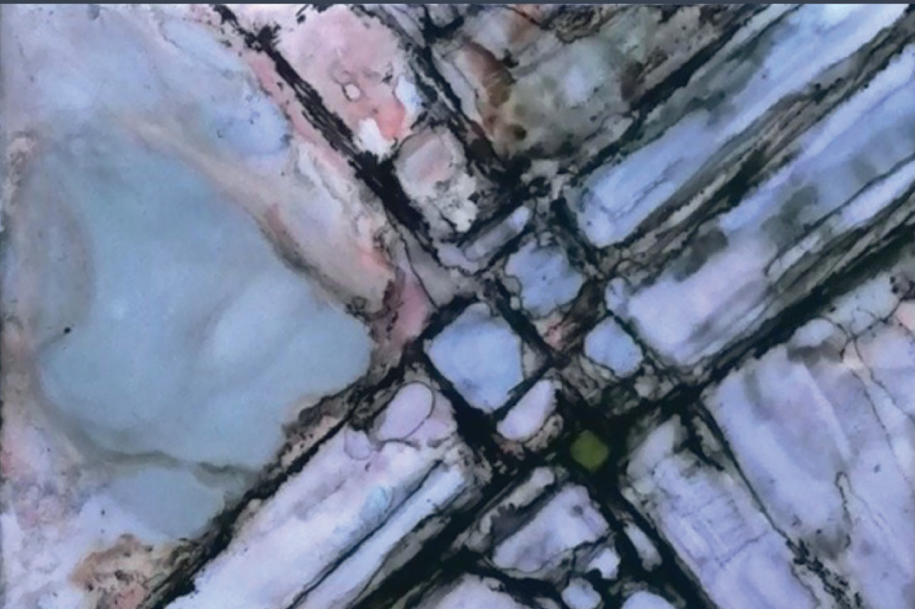


**BOIREANN**

**MUSIC FOR FLUTE & PIANO**



**JOHN BUCKLEY**



EMMA COULTHARD, FLUTE | DAVID APPLETON, PIANO  
EMMA HALNAN, FLUTE

# BOIREANN

Music for Flute and Piano  
John Buckley

<b>Five Études for Two Flutes *</b>		
1.	Perpetuum Mobile	2:13
2.	Ebbing and Flowing	4:32
3.	Canon	2:27
4.	Duetto Notturmo	3:53
5.	Streetcar	2:15
<b>In Memoriam Doris Keogh (for flute and piano)</b>		
6.	I. Seascape	3:34
7.	II. Nocturne	6:02
8.	III. Dance	3:25
<b>Two Fantasias for Alto Flute</b>		
9.	I. Fantasia No. 1	2:54
10.	II. Fantasia No. 2	4:36
11.	<b>Airflow (for solo flute)</b>	5:03
<b>Three Études for Piano (Études I-3)</b>		
12.	I. Nine Variations	2:27
13.	II. Through the Empty-Vaulted Night	4:57
14.	III. Stars and Dreams	4:07
<b>Three Pieces for Solo Flute</b>		
15.	I. No. 1	3:38
16.	II. No. 2	2:49
17.	III. No. 3	2:59
18.	<b>Sea Echoes (for glissando flute)</b>	3:34
19.	<b>Boireann (for flute and piano)</b>	10:44
<b>Total Running Time</b>		<b>76:46</b>

Emma Coulthard, flute | David Appleton, piano | \*with Emma Halnan, flute

## Composer's Foreword

Compositions for flute constitute a significant aspect of my musical output as a composer and now span a period of fifty years. Between 1969 and 1974, I studied flute with the legendary Doris Keogh (1922-2012), in the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin and she greatly encouraged my early efforts at composition. A number of pieces, which I composed during the 1970s, included flute or recorder in the ensemble and Doris Keogh or her student groups were often involved in the performances. Composed in 1973, the earliest flute work in my catalogue is *Three Pieces for Solo Flute*. It was first performed by Derek Moore, another student of Doris Keogh, in Trinity College Dublin in April 1974. The most recent work is *In Memoriam Doris Keogh*, for flute and piano which was completed in 2022, especially for inclusion in this album. In the intervening period I have written a wide range of compositions involving flute: solo flute, flute ensembles, various chamber music combinations, a flute concerto, and works for flute and piano.

The inspiration behind the works on this album has much to do with the nature of the flute itself. The flute is regarded as one of the most flexible of wind instruments and I have attempted to capture something of this versatility and its extraordinary mellifluous sonority. As a chamber and solo instrument the flute draws its finest repertoire from two eras; the Baroque and the contemporary period beginning with Debussy. The Baroque has the great works of Johann Sebastian Bach and his sons as well as Handel, Telemann, Quantz and Vivaldi amongst others. The emergence of the metal flute and its adoption by French composers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries led to its revival as a solo instrument. Debussy's *Syrinx* led the way towards a resurgence of new repertoire, including strikingly original works by composers such as Varèse, Honneger, Roussel, Jolivet, Messiaen, Takemitsu, and Berio. Works by these composers and others act as a background for the compositions contained in this album.

Over the years, I have composed a great number of works for concert flautist William Dowdall, whose playing has been an inspiration. These include *Two Fantasias for Alto*

*Flute* (2004), *Sea Echoes* (2008) for flute with glissando head-joint, *Concerto for Flute and Orchestra, and Constellations* (2009) for multiple overdubbed flutes (bass flute, alto flute, C flute, piccolo). A number of these works are included in the current album. There are two works specifically composed for the album: *Five Études for Two Flutes* and *In Memoriam Doris Keogh*. The études are reinterpretations of earlier pieces for two violins, while *In Memoriam Doris Keogh* is a three-movement piece for flute and piano reflecting on my flute teacher's life and work.

Music for solo piano has also been a feature of my work as a composer over an extended period. The current album includes a relatively recent work, *Three Études for Piano*, commissioned by the New Ross Piano Festival in 2018 and first performed there by Finghin Collins, to whom it is dedicated. The *Three Études for Piano* is the first set of études I am planning to compose for piano. There are now six études in existence.

It has been a privilege to work with such wonderful flautists as Emma Coulthard (another former pupil of Doris Keogh), and Emma Halnan and pianist David Appleton on this recording project. All three are deeply committed to the music they perform. Their performances are marked by technical assurance allied to a vibrant and profound musical understanding and interpretation.

I am deeply grateful to Mary Roberts for her kind permission to use her strikingly beautiful image also called *Boireann* for the artwork on this booklet.

The recording engineer is Chris Corrigan, with whom I have now recorded several albums. His keen and alert ears combined with his amazing editing skills are responsible for the wonderful clarity and presence of sound on this recording.

**John Buckley, 2023**

# The Music

## Five Études for Two Flutes (2022)

1. Perpetuum Mobile
2. Ebbing and Flowing
3. Canon
4. Duetto Notturmo
5. Streetcar

There is a large repertoire of music for flute duos, much of it from either the Baroque period or the nineteenth century. Less common are works from our own time, especially in the form of virtuosic études.

*Five Études for Two Flutes* was composed in 2022 specifically for this album and is dedicated to Emma Coulthard. The work is based on earlier compositions, especially a series of pieces for two violins. The term *étude* is usually associated with a high level of virtuosity, but the term here is also meant to imply a particular focus on specific musical concerns in each of its five movements.

As the title suggests, *Perpetuum Mobile* consists of a constant movement in fast notes. The music for both instruments is tightly interwoven with shifting musical patterns. *Ebbing and Flowing* is generally more flexible in its approach, though its middle section does share a common approach with *Perpetuum Mobile*. The third movement *Canon* consists of rapid ascending and descending scales with the second flute following the first in an exact pattern.

*Duetto Notturmo* is a more reflective nocturnal contemplation which seeks to evoke the shimmering quiet of evening. *Streetcar* is a musical response to Alexander Calder's (1898-1976) mobile of the same name. Calder's kinetic sculptures are imbued

with a mesmerising sense of glowing presence. Their subtle movements create entirely new possibilities for the medium of sculpture, transforming the static into the mobile and responsive.

### **In Memoriam Doris Keogh (2022) (for flute and piano)**

- 1) Seascape
- 2) Nocturne
- 3) Dance

*In Memoriam Doris Keogh* was composed specifically for this album, both the flautist Emma Coulthard and I being former pupils of Doris Keogh (1922-2012) at the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) in Dublin. Doris Keogh had been an orchestral and free-lance flautist prior to taking up a post as a flute and recorder teacher at the RIAM in 1969. She was a completely dedicated and inspirational teacher and her many students have made an outstanding contribution to orchestral and solo flute music throughout the world. Doris had a particular affinity with the great masterpieces of the Baroque period and with music of the twentieth century.

Doris Keogh also founded *The Capriol Consort*, an ensemble which performed music and dance from the medieval and renaissance periods. She undertook research into the dance movements and musical styles of the period as well as ensuring that the group performed in accurately designed period costumes.

The three movements of *In Memoriam Doris Keogh* reflect different aspects of her life and music. She lived overlooking the sea and the first movement evokes the seascape opposite her teaching room.

*Nocturne* imagines Doris in more reflective and thoughtful mood. Melodic statements from the flute evoke responses from the piano, creating a calm nocturnal atmosphere.

The final movement *Dance* pays homage to Doris Keogh's knowledge and love of dance

and her work with the *Capriol Consort*, though the dance evoked here bears little resemblance with the medieval or renaissance period. It is more a generic reference to dance in general.

### **Two Fantasias for Alto Flute (2004)**

*Fantasia No. 1* (1984) and *Fantasia No. 2* (1987) originally for solo treble recorder were written for and are dedicated to Doris Keogh. Although three years separate their composition, they were conceived as a pair and are intended to be performed consecutively. This version for solo alto flute was prepared in 2004 and first performed in November that year by William Dowdall in the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

*Fantasia No. 1* takes as its starting point a theme from an earlier work, *Keoghal* for recorder quintet. The undulating and ornamented musical line is predominantly slow with the character of a lament. *Fantasia No. 2* is a rapidly moving arabesque, which freely develops the opening rhythmic motif. A slower middle section making extensive use of flutter-tonguing technique provides a contrast before a reprise of the opening idea.

### **Airflow (1998) (for solo flute)**

*Airflow* is a work in two complementary parts; a piece of sculpture in bronze by Vivienne Roche and a composition for solo flute composed by John Buckley and performed by William Dowdall.

It was commissioned by the National Sculpture Factory for presentation to Mr. Micheál Martin T.D., then Minister for Education and Science.

The concept for the work evolved through a series of discussions relating to common points of reference between sculpture and music; scale, tone, form, shape, line, and gesture. We have sought to create a dynamic interaction between the two art forms and attempted to capture an atmosphere or airiness and movement.

The first performance was given by William Dowdall at the National Sculpture Factory, Cork in April 1998.

### Three Études for Piano (2018) (Études 1-3)

- 1) Nine Variations
- 2) Through the Empty-Vaulted Night
- 3) Stars and Dreams

The term *étude* is usually associated with a high level of virtuosity, and while *Three Études for Piano* is not without its technical challenges, the term here is also meant to imply a particular focus on specific musical concerns in each of its three movements.

The first *étude*, *Nine Variations*, is entirely built around the opening eight-bar idea. It moves at the same relentless pace throughout the movement, the variations being created by shifting rhythmic patterns, the addition of extra layers to the texture, and journeys to the extreme upper and lower registers of the piano.

The second *étude* *Through the Empty-Vaulted Night* draws its title and atmosphere from the extraordinary resonant image in John Milton's *Comus* (1624).

*How sweetly did they float upon the wings  
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night.*

This movement is based on the balance of song and nocturnal resonance. The song is heard in passages marked as *cantabile* i.e., song-like, while the 'empty-vaulted night' is evoked through the piano's facility for creating sustained resonances.

Emily Brontë, (1818-1848) the world-famous author of *Wuthering Heights*, also created a body of outstanding verse, placing her amongst the most eminent figures of English poetry. Her poetical works are marked by a visionary, emotionally charged, and transcendent quality. The third movement of *Three Études for Piano* is a musical response to her poem *Stars* (1846).

*O, stars and dreams, and gentle night;  
O, night and stars return!*



Two musical ideas dominate this movement: a series of slow chords (dreams), and a superimposed, highly decorative figuration in the upper register (stars).

*Three Études for Piano* was commissioned by the New Ross Piano Festival 2018, with funding provided by An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council. It is dedicated to pianist Finghin Collins, who gave the first performance there in September 2018.

### **Three Pieces for Solo Flute (1973)**

These pieces were completed in 1973 whilst I was studying flute with Doris Keogh at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. The first performance was given the following year in Trinity College, Dublin by Derek Moore.

The first and third piece share a common formal structure – the musical material presented at the outset is expanded and developed leading to climactic points after which an atmosphere of calm reflectiveness gradually sets in. The second piece provides a sharp contrast. Angular fragments and detached notes are developed and juxtaposed in such a manner as to suggest a collage.

### **Sea Echoes (2008) (for solo flute with glissando head-joint)**

*Sea Echoes* for solo flute with sliding head-joint was composed in July 2008 at the suggestion of William Dowdall, to whom it is dedicated. Dowdall gave the first performance in St Patrick's College, Drumcondra in November 2008.

Invented by American flautist Robert Dick, the sliding head-joint is a relatively recent innovation, adding a range of possibilities unavailable on the conventional flute, the most obvious being a true glissando. I was determined from the beginning however, not to create a series of special effects, but to compose a piece, where the new possibilities arose naturally as an extension of the musical argument. As the title suggests, the work is inspired by the undulating shape of the waves, the sibilant whispers as they arrive and retreat from the shore and the distant suggestion of bird and whale song. Overall, I have tried to create a sense of evocation and mystery rather than direct reference.

## **Boireann (1983) (for flute and piano)**

The Irish word 'Boireann' means 'a stony place' and the stony contours, colours, and textures of the Burren region of north Clare provide the immediate inspiration for the piece. The barren appearance of the landscape conceals a wealth of delicate and beautiful flora, unique to the region.

The piece is characterised by craggy and irregular outlines, together with a misty and blurred lyricism. Formally, the work falls into the following sections, played without a break:

1. After three introductory chords the music gradually increases in intensity and activity:
2. Solo flute and piano statements:
3. A blurred and hazy mood prevails, the flute melody making use of quarter tones:
4. Solo flute echoes and transforms the flute passage in 2
5. A section of gradually increasing density recalls the opening of the work but with a greater concentration and urgency.

*Boireann* was commissioned by Mid-West Arts (Ireland), with funding provided by An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council. It was first performed at the Dublin Festival of Twentieth Century Music in the National Concert Hall, Dublin in January 1984 by Madeleine Berkeley (flute), to whom it is dedicated, and Jane O' Leary (piano).

## The Composer

Born in Templeglantine, Co. Limerick in 1951, **John Buckley** studied flute with Doris Keogh and composition with James Wilson at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. His subsequent composition studies were in Cardiff with the Welsh composer Alun Hoddinott and with John Cage.

He has written a diverse range of work, from solo instruments to full orchestra. The list includes numerous commissions, amongst them *Concerto for Organ and Orchestra* and *Campane in Aria* for the National Concert Hall, *Rivers of Paradise* for the official opening of the Concert Hall at the University of Limerick, *Maynooth Te Deum* for the bicentenary of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, and *A Mirror into the Light* for Camerata Ireland's inaugural concert and many works for RTÉ.

John Buckley's catalogue now extends to over 130 works, which have been performed and broadcast in more than fifty countries worldwide. His compositions have represented Ireland on five occasions at the International Rostrum of Composers and at six International Society of Contemporary Music festivals. Amongst his awards are the Varming Prize (1977), the Macaulay Fellowship (1978), the Arts Council's Composers' Bursary (1982), and the Toonder Award (1991). In 1984 he was elected a member of Aosdána, Ireland's state sponsored academy of creative artists. His music has been recorded on the Anew, Altarus, Black Box, Marco Polo, Lyric FM, Atoll, Celestial Harmonies, Diatribe, Hedone, and Métier labels. He has made numerous broadcasts on music and music education for RTÉ and Lyric FM.

He has been awarded both a PhD and a DMus by the National University of Ireland and was a senior lecturer and associate professor in music at St Patrick's, College, Dublin City University between 2001 and 2017. A monograph on his life and work *Constellations: The Life and Music of John Buckley* by Benjamin Dwyer was published in May 2011 by Carysfort Press.

Further information can be found at [johnbuckleycomposer.com](http://johnbuckleycomposer.com)

## The Performers

**Emma Coulthard** studied Flute and Recorder at the Royal Irish Academy of Music with Doris Keogh, and Musicology at Trinity College Dublin. Emma took a keen interest in contemporary music from early in her career, collaborating with Irish composers including John Buckley, Martin O'Leary and Paul Hayes in the early 1990s. Emma was the soloist for Paul Hayes's Prix Italia piece 'Mass Production' and as a singer worked with Michael Holohan on settings of Seamus Heaney poems. In 2018, whilst living in Wales Emma returned to her work with Irish composers, commissioning and premiering several new works from Fergus Johnston, Paul Hayes, John McLachlan, Gráinne Mulvey, Jenn Kirby and Anna Murray, which led to performances in Tokyo, Sofia, Cardiff, Dublin and Maynooth. In 2022 she was part of Benjamin Dwyer's SacrumProfanum project, which has been released on Farpoint, and the 'Connected Skies' project with Angela Slater funded by ACE. She has been broadcast on BBC and RTÉ radio and television, and has been published by Music Sales and Trinity.

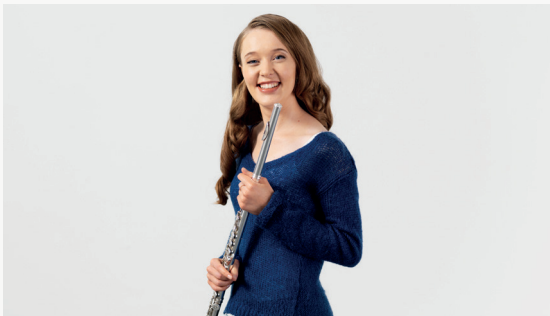


*Emma Coulthard*

**Emma Halnan** first came to prominence as woodwind category winner of BBC Young Musician 2010. She has since appeared at major venues worldwide, and has performed concertos with orchestras such as the London Mozart Players and the European Union Chamber Orchestra. Other competition successes include the Sussex Prize for Woodwind in the Royal Overseas League Competition 2019 and first prize in the Sir Karl Jenkins/Arts Club Award 2016. Emma was been selected as a “Making Music” Young Artist 2018-20, and is a City Music Foundation Artist.

Emma was principal flute of the European Union Youth Orchestra 2014-16. She has also freelanced with orchestras including the London Mozart Players, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, English National Opera, and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Emma is a highly reputed and very dedicated teacher. She teaches privately, for the University of Cambridge, and at Trinity Laban Conservatoire. Her pupils have gained places in national ensembles and at various conservatoires (both junior and senior departments). Emma studied at the Royal Academy of Music with William Bennett and Kate Hill, and afterwards with Robert Winn. She previously studied at the Purcell School with Anna Pope.



*Emma Halnan*

**David Appleton's** most notable body of performance experience has been with the six piano ensemble Piano Circus, with whom he was a co-director between 1994 and 2014. As well as extensive touring in Europe, South East Asia and the USA and South America with the group, notable recordings include the album *Transmission* (Observer CD of the week in 2001), *Future Sound of London* with Max Richter and *Skin & Wire* with the legendary drummer Bill Bruford (2009). Collaborations also include Pete Townsend: *The Lighthouse* at Sadlers Wells, Michael Clark: *Oh, My Goddess*, also at Sadlers Wells and touring, plus combining abseiling with pianistic endeavour with aerial theatre company Scarabeus. Work with piano duo partner Kate Ryder (1998-2008) included *Three Little Scandals* film and live music at The Barbican and critically acclaimed performances of Stockhausen: *Mantra*.



*David Appleton*

Recorded at The Harty Room, Queen's University Belfast  
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Producer: Chris Corrigan  
Executive Producer: John Buckley  
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from Divine Art Recording Group



## To the Northeast

The choral music of John Buckley

The Mornington Singers are superbly conducted by Orla Flanagan, and provide a performance which in each work is totally in tune with the text and the setting. Most songs are in English, though the Five Two-Part songs for children are sung in Gaelic Irish.

Mornington Singers

Orla Flanagan, conductor

Divine Art DDA 25187

### *Choir & Organ*

"Buckley's writing is skilfully crafted. Chromaticism plays an important part in these settings which he uses creatively. Orla Flanagan's Mornington Singers are an exceptional group of finely trained musicians, and their interpretation of the music is outstanding"

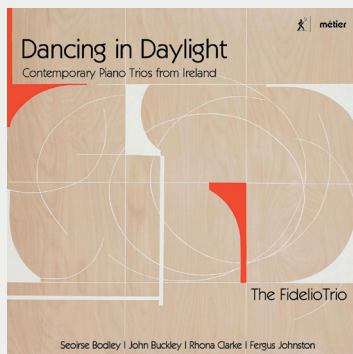
—Shirley Ratcliffe

### *American Record Guide*

"John Buckley is one of those composers who can write adeptly in just about any style he chooses. The choir champions Buckley's music with handsome tone and expressive colors."

—Philip Greenfield





## Dancing in Daylight

Contemporary Piano Trios from Ireland

*Fergus Johnston, John Buckley, Rhona Clarke,  
Seoirse Bodley*

Delightful (all composed in the past four years), these piano trios by four leading Irish composers are modern enough in style to provide ever-interesting sounds, but without becoming too challenging – in fact they represent the best contemporary approach to often tuneful and lyrical compositions and in places touches of jazz, and exotic rhythms. Superbly played, as ever, by the astounding Fidelio Trio.

The Fidelio Trio  
Métier – MSV 28556

### *Fanfare*

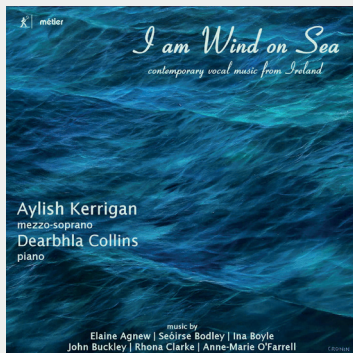
“From first note to last in this wholly unexpected but consistently enthralling surprise, [The Fidelio Trio] do themselves, the gifted composers, and the Old Sod very proud.”

—Jim Svejda

### *The Classical Reviewer*

“These players deliver the most impressive performances of these fine works. The recording is excellent and there are informative booklet notes. This is an attractive release that brings some impressive contemporary piano trios.”

—Bruce Reader



## I am Wind on Sea

Contemporary Vocal Music from Ireland

Anne-Marie O'Farrell, Elaine Agnew, Ina Boyle, John Buckley, Rhona Clarke, Seoirse Bodley

Six composers represented here show the amazing variety and diversity of recent Irish compositions. Mezzo-soprano Aylish Kerrigan is famed for her one-woman shows and performance of both contemporary Irish music and also German theatre music, she is particularly active in the world of contemporary art-song, as demonstrated here with her longstanding partner Dearbhla Collins.

Aylish Kerrigan, mezzo-soprano  
Dearbhla Collins, piano  
Métier – MSV 28558

### *New Music Journal*

"The [Buckley] work, and its performance on this CD, represents a tour de force in contemporary Irish vocal music. It is significant to have this neglected figure [Ina Boyle] and her music included on this CD. Her ability to capture a mood with short gestures is clearly in evidence here, as is her operatic leaning."

—Martin O'Leary

### *Fanfare*

"A fascinating array of poetic moods... the album is noteworthy for the way in which music and text are married to haunting effect. Kerrigan's mezzo is most convincing in its lower register, but she also has the ability to float some ethereal lines, and she is a master of dramatic delivery of text. Collins provides evocative support on the piano with the crystalline clarity of her tone and the fluidity of her line. The sound on the CD is crisp, clear, and nuanced nicely. The packaging of the CD is commendable, with complete texts, informative liner notes about each work and composer plus both performers. For fans of contemporary art song, this collection will be a welcome addition to their libraries."

—Carla Maria Verdino-Süllwold

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*John Buckley*