

SEAN TYRRELL BIOGRAPHY

A native of the slower moving West of Ireland, Sean took his time before committing himself to record. It was time well spent, exposing himself to the experiences of different cultures, musical genres, and literary heritage. Sean was surrounded by music all his life, coming from a family immersed in the musical traditions of his native Galway. During the sixties he performed in the city's premier folk club - the Folk Castle, honing his vocal and instrumental skills, while rubbing the shoulders with a host of celebrated artists who performed there.

Sean emigrated to New York in 1968 and slotted into the folk club scene in Greenwich Village. The early seventies took him west to San Francisco and a diet of Irish music sessions. It was here Sean's reputation as an exceptional singer of songs, took root. Traversing New Hampshire in the mid seventies, he co-founded 'Apples in Winter', a band which was short lived but well recognised.

He returned to Ireland in the late seventies, where he continued to compose, but seldom played in public. In 1978 he accepted employment with the University of Galway, based in the heart of the Burren in County Clare. It's hard to avoid music in this part of Ireland and soon Sean was lured back into the music scene. His ability was recognised and appreciated, even amidst a host of legendary musicians. With a growing reputation, he was invited to 'guest' on several recordings, including two albums with the ex-Moving Hearts uilleann piper, Davy Spillane. Swapping the Burren for the sheltered Bell Harbour, close to the border of his native county, Sean divided his time juggling the demands of mussel farming and a re-energised approach to his music.

He became fascinated by the forward thinking poem 'The Midnight Court' (all 1,206 lines of it), written during the 17th Century, by Brian Merriman. He became almost obsessed by the play and a desire to set the work to music. This feat was achieved with much success when the Druid Theatre Galway staged Sean Tyrrell's 'traditional music opera' featuring Sean with a host of talented contemporaries. In the following years the musical has toured extensively around Ireland with the possibility of future international showings.

On the heels of the success of his recordings with Davy Spillane, Sean embarked on his first solo project, "Cry of A Dreamer", recorded on his own label Longwalk Music. The album was released in April, 1994 and was greeted with great critical acclaim, voted Best Folk Album of the Year by both Folk Roots and Hotpress. In 1996 the album was picked up by Hannibal/Rykodisc and was selected for a Spotlight Review by Billboard Magazine calling Sean "the genuine article!" Sean began touring extensively in Ireland, England, the Continent and the USA. He performed at major festivals and concert halls, including the 1996 Irish Folk Festival Tour of Germany, Switzerland and Austria, as a featured solo performer.

In 1999 he released his much anticipated second solo effort, "The Orchard". Again the album was met with critical acclaim, as Sean was voted Best Overall Folk Act and the album was voted Best Folk Album by the readers of Irish Music Magazine. "The Orchard" was also voted the number 2 Roots/Trad Album by Hot Press Critics Poll. This album was followed by extensive touring as larger audiences became exposed to his infectious songs and music.

In more recent times, Sean has contributed music and songs to such projects as, "A Necklace of Wrens" a documentary on the life and Poetry of Michael Hartnett, whose poem "Billy Mulvihill" Sean set to music on "The Orchard. Sean also collaborated with 8 other international artists on a compilation album "Songs of Peace" to commemorate the life and work of Francis Ledwidge who died in the First World War. The album and live concert were conducted in Flanders amid the memories and tragedy that resulted from that atrocity. A recent German film documentary on Sean's native Galway included his performance of a Michael Hartnett poem "Belladonna in the Bar".

Sean has toured Ireland, England, the Continent, America and Australia in the past with: Kevin Glackin and Ronan Brown; Davy Spillane; Three for the Ditch (Sean, Frankie Lane, and comedian Jack Lynch); Paddy Keenan; poet Mary O'Malley.

Sean has expanded his touring profile as he now regularly tours both as a solo act and with a supporting band of various sizes. He is currently embarking on an international tour of America, Ireland, Wales and England with the legendary Tommy Peoples. Tommy and Sean have been neighbours and musical sparring partners for years and are now excited to bring their unique stylings on both traditional and contemporary Irish music to an international audience.

After being disappointed by the lack of support from Hannibal/Rykodisk, Sean has returned to recording on his own label, Longwalk Music, and is planning for a re-release of his first album "Cry of a Dreamer" in 2001.