
Let's Go O'Carolan

Music of Turlough O'Carolan – Cliff Cole

Introduction:

Turlough O'Carolan was an Irish harper and composer who lived from 1670 to 1738. Blinded by smallpox at around the age of eighteen, he learned to play the harp. He then traveled throughout Ireland the rest of his life, composing songs for his generally well-to-do patrons. Many of O'Carolan's compositions are called "planxties". The Irish word "planxty" means "a song for".

O'Carolan music was influenced by Italian Baroque composers. This aspect of his compositions set him apart from other Irish harpers of the day. Much of the work written by his contemporaries has been lost, since it was not written down. We are lucky that O'Carolan's music has survived so we can enjoy listening and playing his music.

In this workshop we will learn to play a few of the old masters tunes. We will talk about the feel of the music and discuss some ideas on how to approach this music on the hammered dulcimer.

Tunes to Learn

- Sheebeg and Sheemore (si'bheg and si'mhor) - The Big Fairy Hill and the Little Fairy Hill – Commemorates a battle between the two fairy hills where the little side won!
- Planxty Fanny Poer (Francis Power); Also called Mrs. Trench – This tune was likely composed for her wedding to Richard Trench.
- Lord Inchiquin – Thought to have been composed in honor of the Fourth Earl of Inchiquin who was a descendent of one of the great Irish Chiefs, Baron Inchiquin
- Southwind – A waltz attributed to O'Carolan. While it is debatable if he wrote it or not, it is certainly in the style of many tunes that he wrote.

These tunes and many others are all available at:

<http://tonyupton.tripod.com/carolan.html>

Reverences and Links

<http://www.oldmusicproject.com/OneilsOcarolans.html>

<http://www.contemplator.com/carolan/index.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turlough_O'Carolan#Work

<http://www.celticguitarmusic.com/receipt.htm>

About The Author

Cliff Cole purchased his first hammered dulcimer in 1985, from Sam Rizzetta. At the time he was playing drums in a blues band. Prior to taking up the dulcimer, he studied drums and percussion for ten years. Since the age of fifteen Cliff has played in numerous rock, blues, jazz, zydeco and folk ensembles. Folk instruments are where the heart is.

Cliff plays the hammered dulcimer in the family folk group "DayBreak," which has been together since 1989. They have made several recordings, including "Lost Cave" which was recorded live inside of Lost River Caverns in Hellertown, PA, "Little Steps", and "Autumn Calling," which features many of Cliff's original tunes. They also have produced two Christmas CD's one named "Unity; Unique Music for Christmas" and a live Holiday concert recorded in December of 2002. Cliff also helped produced a wonderful CD with his daughter Emily Rose Cole, called "I Wanna Know" That was released in 2012.

DayBreak's music is available on CD-Baby, iTunes and many other digital download stores found on the web.

Cliff is very active in the folk scene. He is on he board of Perkasio Patchwork Coffeeshouse, where he often works the sound board. He also sometimes does sound at Godfrey Daniel's a folk club in Bethlehem, PA. Cliff is also a founding member of the Quakertown Area Dulcimer and Autoharp Society ([QUADAS.](#)) He has been a workshop leader at many dulcimer festivals through the years. James Jones made Cliff's hammered dulcimer. The full sized 2/16/18/7 instrument covers four octaves and has dampening pedal. For more information about James Jones instruments go to his web site:

<http://www.jamesjonesinstruments.com>

Cliff lives with his lovely wife, Pamela, in Quakertown, Pennsylvania. He works as a computer hardware test engineer for the Intel Corporation, in an office located in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.

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This document can be downloaded from: <http://www.daybreakfolk.com/CliffCole.htm>

Planxty Fanny Poer

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Planxty Fanny Poer" by Turlough O'Carolan, specifically arranged for Violin. The score is presented on three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 9/8 time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplet markings. The second staff continues the melody with similar rhythmic patterns and includes a repeat sign. The third staff concludes the piece with a final cadence. The name "Violin" is written in red text to the left of the first staff, and the composer's name "Turlough O'Carolan" is written in green text in the upper right corner of the score area.

Shebeg Shemore

Violin

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Shebeg Shemore' for Violin. It consists of five staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first staff begins with a double bar line and repeat dots. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff has a double bar line with repeat dots. The fourth staff continues the melody. The fifth staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

South Wind

The South Wind

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'The South Wind'. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first staff begins the melody. The second staff starts with a measure number '9' below the first measure. The third staff starts with a measure number '17' below the first measure and includes a blue '3' indicating a triplet. The fourth staff starts with a measure number '25' below the first measure and includes a blue '3' indicating a triplet. The score ends with a double bar line.

Lord Inchiquin

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Lord Inchiquin". The score is written on ten staves, each containing a line of music. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The music is primarily composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some quarter notes and rests. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 8, 16, 24, 32, 40, 48, 56, 64, 72, and 80 indicated at the beginning of their respective staves. The final measure of the score is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign.