International. Engineered by Trevor Hutchinson and Blaise Barton. Annotated by John and
Patricia O’Brien, Marty Fahey, Liz Carroll, Liz Knowles, Kieran O’Hare, Nancy Hurrell,
Ann Heymann, and Karol Mullaney-Dignam. Produced by Liz Carroll, Marty Fahey and Liz
Knowles. 24-page booklet with notes in English. Colour photographs. CD, 15 tracks (59:31).

The old and new, unusual and apparently familiar, are present on this recording of music to
accompany an exhibition of the same name at the Art Institute of Chicago. The completeness
of the concept and product is impressive, with the quality of musicianship, production,
images, and liner notes contributing to the aesthetic experience. The opening track,
“O’Carolan’s Concerto,” provides a musical representation of the Egan harp featured on the
cover and offers a little of what many listeners will be familiar with from the canon of Irish
traditional music. A closer listen, aided by the liner notes, informs us that harper Catríona
McKay returned to the Bunting Collection of 1796 to present a less familiar version of the
piece. The instrumentation develops gradually through the tracks, interspersed with solos on
uilleann pipes, piano, and fiddle, each providing interpretations of repertoire too easily left
silent in collections. While the performers are not an established ensemble, the order of tracks
and treatment of the music is coherent, interesting, and enjoyable.

This album highlights a diversity of repertoire beyond familiar session tunes such as jigs and
reels from which the Irish music enthusiast may draw. Reaching into lesser known
collections, such as the track borrowed from Tunes from the Goodman Manuscripts (2012), it
highlights the ongoing development of scholarship in this area. The album also introduces
new compositions by Liz Carroll, currently one of the foremost tunesmiths in the tradition.
The quality of the accompanying booklet brings to the listener some of the beauty of the art
that formed the exhibition for which this CD was created, and contributions from scholars
briefly synopsise relevant research to place the music in context. It is a worthy effort to
capture in sound the artistic culture of a period of Irish history and its legacy into the present.

References cited

O’Brien, Mick, Emer Mayock, Aoife Ní Bhriain

DAITHÍ KEARNEY