

**Ireland: Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690–1840: The Music.** 2015. O'Brien 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 Catriona 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 synopsisize 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

2012 *Tunes from the Goodman Manuscripts*. Is Mise Records Ismise003. Compact disc.

DAITHÍ KEARNEY