

Ceolta Sí

Ceolta Sí are the performing group of the Youghal branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. This international award winning group have performed all over the world and, for over 25 years, they have been staging summer shows in Youghal for local residents and visitors to the area.

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Ceolta Sí and Craobh Eochaille CCÉ would like to acknowledge the assistance and support of:

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- The teachers, volunteers and committee members of Brú na Sí Cultural Centre:

Teachers: Aoife Butler, Chloe Kennedy, Emma Kennedy, Ciara Lynch, Sinéad Ní Mhóinbhíol, Orla Morrison and Aisling Pierce.

Guest facilitators and workshop leaders including Adèle Commins, Joanne Cusack, Martha Guiney, Ellie Nic Fhionnghaille, Daithí Kearney and Donal Savage.

Imagery: Liam O'Leary, with photographic contributions from Janice O'Leary, Sophie Roseneau, National Library of Ireland.

Set and Staging: Mícheál de Buitléir, Pat Carey & Brigid Shelly.

Note on Music:

All music performed in *Oidhreacht Eochaille* is traditional and drawn from research undertaken into the musical heritage of the local area with the exception of:

Storm at Sea, Moll Goggins Reel, The Ballad of Moll Goggins, The Clock Tower Jig, John McGrath's Clock Tower, Cromwell's Arch, The Jewish Polka (all composed Daithí Kearney).

Ceolta Sí
&
Craobh Eochaille CCÉ
present

Oidhreacht Eochaille

The Heritage of Youghal

Oidhreacht Eochaille

Scene 1: Sea Song in Youghal Harbour

Welcome to Youghal. Eochaille. The yew wood. Our pageant celebrates the heritage of Youghal, drawing on its links to the sea, the many characters of its story and the buildings that they created. The opening piece is entitled 'Sea Song' and we follow it with the set dance 'Youghal Harbour'.

Scene 2: Storm at Sea

A storm in 830 is responsible for the location of the estuary of the River Blackwater today. During the 17th century Youghal was one of Ireland's main ports, attracting pirates as well as traders and fishermen. Today the harbour is less important as a trading port but we can still watch out at the boats that bob on the waves, as in the old Irish song, 'Óró mo Bháidín', followed by the old jig, 'The Ship in Full Sail'. 'An Mhaighdean Mhara', the maiden of the waves is followed by a set of reels, 'The Tarbolton', 'The Longford Collector' and finishing with 'The Sailor's Bonnet'.

Scene 3: Class and Outside Influence

The heritage of Youghal has been influenced by the many characters who have occupied its streets and lands through the centuries. In the 17th century, waltzes were introduced to Ireland and one of the earliest is 'The Youghal Waltz', published in 1810. The Quakers settled in Youghal and evidence remains around the town. Two tunes exist in the Irish tradition that suggest mischief making, namely 'Merrily Kiss the Quaker' and 'Merrily Kiss the Quaker's Wife'. Moll Goggins Corner is named for one of the many characters in Youghal's history. Myrtle Grove is an immensely important building located beside St Mary's Collegiate Church, a reminder that Youghal was a centre of learning at this time. The tune 'Myrtle Grove' takes inspiration from European Baroque music and represents the type of music that may have been played in Youghal amongst the gentry.



Scene 4: The Clock Gate

'The Clock Gate Jig' was inspired by the landmark building in the centre of the town. The reel 'The Eel in the Sink' provides music for the dancers to reflect the desire amongst locals and tourists alike to photograph this famous building. 'McGrath's Clock Gate' is a new song inspired by the stories of local man John McGrath who lived in the tower in his youth. The area around the Clock Gate was also the location for céilí dances which were occasions for the promotion of the Irish language. Two polkas inspire the dancers. The unusual musical mode of the first is a reference to William Moses Annyas Eaneswho, in 1855, became the mayor of Youghal in County Cork. He was the first Jew to hold such an elected position in Ireland.

Scene 5: Hinterland

'The High Road to Cork' is taken from Canon James Goodman's collection from the 19th century. 'Lighting Capel Island' is a recent composition inspired by the island located a short distance from Knockadoon Head near Youghal. The island's silhouette includes an incomplete 19th century lighthouse. Youghal is located near the Gaelic poetry courts of Sliabh gCua and Ballykineally, while the nearby Gaeltacht of An Rinn continues to nurture a sean-nós singing tradition. The song 'Eochaille', using the Irish name for the town of Youghal, tells of a girl from the area whose voice was sweeter than fairy music. Piaras Mac Gearailt or Pierce Fitzgerald was an important literary figure in 'Gaelic Ireland'. Mac Gearailt signed himself as *Aird-Shirriam Leatha Mogha*, the Chief Poet of Munster! His most famous song is undoubtedly *Rose Catha na Mumhan*, The Munster War Song written around 1780. Imagining a sea fleet of a great Prince coming to help, Mac Gearailt calls to the clansmen of the Gael to unite, shake off their bonds, and strike for freedom. 'The Top of Cork Road' is taken from the 18th century collection of the piper O'Farrell.

Scene 6: Heritage Today

Today Youghal has a vibrant Irish music community based at Brú na Sí. A branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* was established in Youghal in the early 1980s. Today musicians, singers and dancers from Ceolta Sí perform in Youghal and across the globe, celebrating the heritage of Youghal and surrounding areas.