

Eric Sweeney

(b. 1948)

“Since my second symphony I have developed a more tonal and at times minimalist language which often uses Irish traditional music as source material. However, such Irish elements are used in a non-traditional way. Fragments of melodies appear in multiple canons and overlapping sequences thus hinting at, but never stating, their traditional source.”

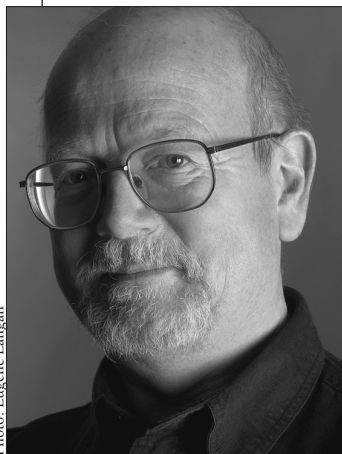


Photo: Eugene Langan

Eric Sweeney was born in Dublin. He studied in Ireland, England, Belgium and Italy and his first compositions – songs, piano pieces and choral works – date from the late 1960s. His compositional style has been influenced by Bartók, Messiaen, Panufnik and, more recently, John Adams and Steve Reich. In addition to commissions from several

important organisations and festivals his music has represented Ireland at the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris on five occasions. His works have been broadcast on many European networks as well as in the USA and Canada.

Eric Sweeney has lectured at the DIT Conservatory of Music and at Trinity College, Dublin, and was Choral Director at RTÉ from 1978-81. He is now Head of the Music Department at Waterford Institute of Technology and was awarded a DPhil in composition by the University of Ulster in 1994. In 1995 he was composer-in-residence at the Newport Music Festival, Rhode Island, USA and in 1998 he was Visiting Scholar in Composition at the University of Illinois, Urbana. He is a member of Aosdána, Ireland's state-sponsored academy of creative artists and was a member of the Arts Council from 1989 to 1993.

Selected Works

ORCHESTRAL

Granard - A Memorial (2004)

ob cl bn 2 hn 2 trb btrb mar perc pf 2 vn va vc db
MS 13'

Commissioned by the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra.
Premiere: 12 November 2004. National Concert Hall, Dublin.
RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, conductor William Eddins.

Concerto for Guitar (2004)

gui, 2 vn va vc
MS 21'

Premiere: 19 February 2005. Westmoreland United Church, Maryland, Washington DC.

Concerto for Four Violins and String Orchestra (1999)

4 vn-solo, str
Beaumaris Publications 20'

Premiere: 12 August 2001. Peru. European Union Chamber Orchestra.

Concerto for Saxophone and String Orchestra (1998)

ssax-solo, str
Beaumaris Publications 23'

Premiere: 17 February 2002. Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. Sarah Field (sax), Goldberg Ensemble, conductor Malcolm Layfield.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Dance Music (1989)

2222 4331 2 perc str
MS 12'

Commissioned by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.
Premiere: 11 May 1989. National Concert Hall, Dublin. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conductor Sir Charles Groves.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Symphony No. 2 (1985 - 1987)

2222 4231 timp perc pf str
MS 22'

Premiere: 1988. National Concert Hall, Dublin. RTE Symphony Orchestra, conductor Colman Pearce.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Circles (1985)

str
MS 15'

Commissioned by the Dublin Baroque Players with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: July 1985. Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin. Dublin Baroque Players.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

ENSEMBLE

Autumn Music (2005)

fl 2 pf / fl vn vc
MS 5'

Babylon (1998)

cl, 3 kbd
Beaumaris Publications 18'

Premiere: 2 December 1998. Kranart Art Centre, Urbana, Illinois. University of Illinois New Music Ensemble.

Comhrá (1998)

vn vc
Beaumaris Publications 10'

Commissioned by Moya O'Grady with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 30 October 1998. John Field Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin. David Doherty (vn), Moya O'Grady (vc).
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Acclamations (1998)

ob pf
 Beaumaris Publications 6'
 Premiere: 3 November 1999. Garter Lane Arts Centre,
 Waterford. John Stringer (ob), Catherine Laws (pf).

Pulsation (1997)

3 pf
 Beaumaris Publications
 Premiere: 18 April 1997. Garter Lane Arts Centre, Waterford.

Mandala 1, 2 and 3 (1996)

Three suites for violin, piano; viola, piano; cello, piano
 Beaumaris Publications 6'
 Commissioned by the Young European Strings with funds
 provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
 Premiere: 18 August 1996. Young European Strings
 Masterclasses, Waterford.
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

String Quartet (1996)

Beaumaris Publications 20'
 Premiere: 10 October 1996. Student Centre, University College
 Cork. RTE Vanbrugh Quartet.
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Momentum (1993)

4 kbd
 Beaumaris Publications 6'
 Premiere: 9 April 1995. Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of
 Modern Art, Dublin. Una Hunt, Pádraic Ó Cuinneagáin,
 Danusia Oslizlok, Eric Sweeney (kbd).
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Drive (1992 - 1994)

2 versions available
 vn pf mar vc / 4 kbd
 Beaumaris Publications 12'
 Premiere: 2 October 1994. Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of
 Modern Art, Dublin. Concorde: Alan Smale (vn), Jane O'Leary
 (pf), Richard O'Donnell (mar), David James (vc).
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Duo (1991)

vn pf / sax, pf
 Beaumaris Publications / Camden Music 4'
 Premiere: 1992. Waterford Regional Technical College. Thérèse
 Timoney (vn), Eric Sweeney (pf).
 Recording: *Contemporary Music from Ireland, Volume One*.
 Gerard McChrystal (sax), Kathryn Page (pf). Contemporary
 Music Centre 1995. CMC CD01.

Strings in the Earth and Air (1988)

vn va
 MS 8'
 Commissioned by Concorde with funds provided by the Arts
 Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon and McCullough Pigott Ltd.
 Premiere: 20 November 1988. Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery
 of Modern Art, Dublin. Concorde: Alan Smale (vn), Elizabeth
 Csibi (va).
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Five Inventions (1983)

fl ob cl bn hn / pf
 Beaumaris Publications 8'
 Premiere: January 1985. Waterford. Harlequin Quintet.
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

SOLO INSTRUMENTAL

Three Irish Folktunes (2003)

pf/hrp
 Beaumaris Publications 7'

Le Cercle de Lumiere (1999)

org
 Beaumaris Publications 10'
 Commissioned by Peter Sweeney.
 Premiere: 30 July 2000. St Michael's Church, Dún Laoghaire,
 Co. Dublin. Peter Sweeney (org). Recording: Circle of Light.
 Eric Sweeney (org). Dublin Choral Foundation 2003.
 DCF CD 04.

Sonata (1998)

pf
 Beaumaris Publications 22'
 Premiere: 29 June 1999. Beaminster Arts Festival, Dorset,
 England. Alison Farr (pf).

The Windhover (1995)

pf
 Contemporary Music Centre Editions / CMC 1016 5'
 Commissioned by Feis Ceoil, Dublin with funds provided
 by Siemens Nixdorf, as a test piece for the European Music
 Competitions for Youth (Junior Competition), 1996.

Premiere: 17 October 1996. Royal Dublin Society Concert Hall,
 Dublin. Aino Elizabeth Theisen (pf).
 Recording: *Junge Meisterpianisten*. Martin Helmchen (pf). Music
 Alliance 1996. MA-DE 96 12 701.

The Bright Seraphim (1992 rev. 1994)

org
 Beaumaris Publications 15'
 Premiere: 26 February 1995. Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin.
 Peter Sweeney (org). Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

VOCAL AND CHORAL

Te Deum (2000)

satb [with solo], 2 tpt, 2 hn, 2 trb, timp, org
 Text: Sacred
 Beaumaris Publications 25'
 Premiere: 12 April 2000. Good Shepherd Chapel, College
 Hill, Waterford. Valerie Leahy (S-solo), Waterford Institute of
 Technology choir, conductor Eric Sweeney

Mass of St. Patrick (2006)

satb, org

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (2007)

tb, org

Niamh of the Golden Hair (2004)

ssa 1110 0100 timp perc 2 pf str
 MS 25'
 Commissioned by Artswave Waterford
 Premiere: 30 January 2005. Good Shepherd Chapel, Waterford.
 Anne Farrell (speaker), choirs and orchestras of Waterford
 Institute of Technology.

Prayer (1995, rev. 2002)

satb
 Text: Seán Dunne
 Beaumaris Publications 3'
 Commissioned by Dr Jan van Putten and the Blackwater
 Singers. Premiere: 4 May 1996. Cork Choral Festival, Cork.
 Blackwater Singers, conductor Jan van Putten.

The Moon Cradle (1995)

medium voice, cl [opt.], pf
 Text: Padraic Colum
 Beaumaris Publications 20'
 Commissioned by 1995 Newport Music Festival, Rhode Island,
 USA with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle
 Ealaíon.
 Premiere: 16 July 1995. Newport Festival, Rhode Island, USA.
 Melanie Sonnenberg (Mez-solo), Michael Collins (cl), Thomas
 Hrynkiw (pf).
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Deirdre (1989)

S-solo, Bar-solo, satb [div.], 2222 4331 perc, 2 pf, synth str
 speaker
 MS 35'
 Premiere: 6 April 1990. National Concert Hall, Dublin.
 Kathleen Tynan (S-solo), Peter McBrien (Bar-solo), RTE
 Chamber Choir, Waterford Regional Technical College
 Choir, National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Bill Golding
 (speaker), conductor Colman Pearce.
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Deise Dei (1983)

S-solo, Bar-solo, satb, 2 pf, timp, perc
 Text: John Ennis.
 MS 30'
 Commissioned by The Culwick Choral Society, Dublin, with
 funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
 Premiere: 1985. Waterford Regional Technical College.
 Waterford College Choir, Kathleen Tynan (S-solo), Roger
 Pickett (Bar-solo), conductor, Eric Sweeney.
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

ELECTRO-ACOUSTIC AND MIXED MEDIA

Ripples in Time (2002)

Commissioned by the Waterford Youth Drama Dance project.
 Premiere: 14 May 2002. Garter Lane Arts Centre, Waterford.
 Recording: Rockfield Recordings 2002.

Into the Ether (2000)

Incidental music to accompany an art
 exhibition by Mairin Grant
 tape 17'
 Premiere: 1 September 2000. The Granary,
 Waterford.
 Recording: CMC Sound Archive.