

# A return to Gaelic Ireland

LIMERICK journalist and broadcaster John O'Regan is thrilled that his compilation album 'Gaelic Ireland' is about to be re-released on ARC Music. "It is an album that has got longevity and an album that deserves to be out there", he told Limerick Post this week.

In 2003 a CD called 'Gaelic Ireland' was compiled by John O'Regan whose background knowledge of folk and traditional music has rightly been described as "encyclopaedic". John writes for Irish Music Magazine in Dublin, fRoots (Folk Roots) in London and The Living Tradition in Scotland. As well as giving college lectures in Music Journalism he has also appeared as a guest contributor on RTE and BBC Radio 4.

The album features a selection of songs in Irish both traditional and contemporary from artists such as Brian Kennedy, Altan, The Dubliners, Katie McMahon (Riverdance) and Daithi O'Sé of RTE fame.

Gaelic Ireland was a process that took two years to come to fruition, and was inspired by the fact there was already available similar compilations titled Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Wales, so John thought, Why not a Gaelic Ireland compilation?

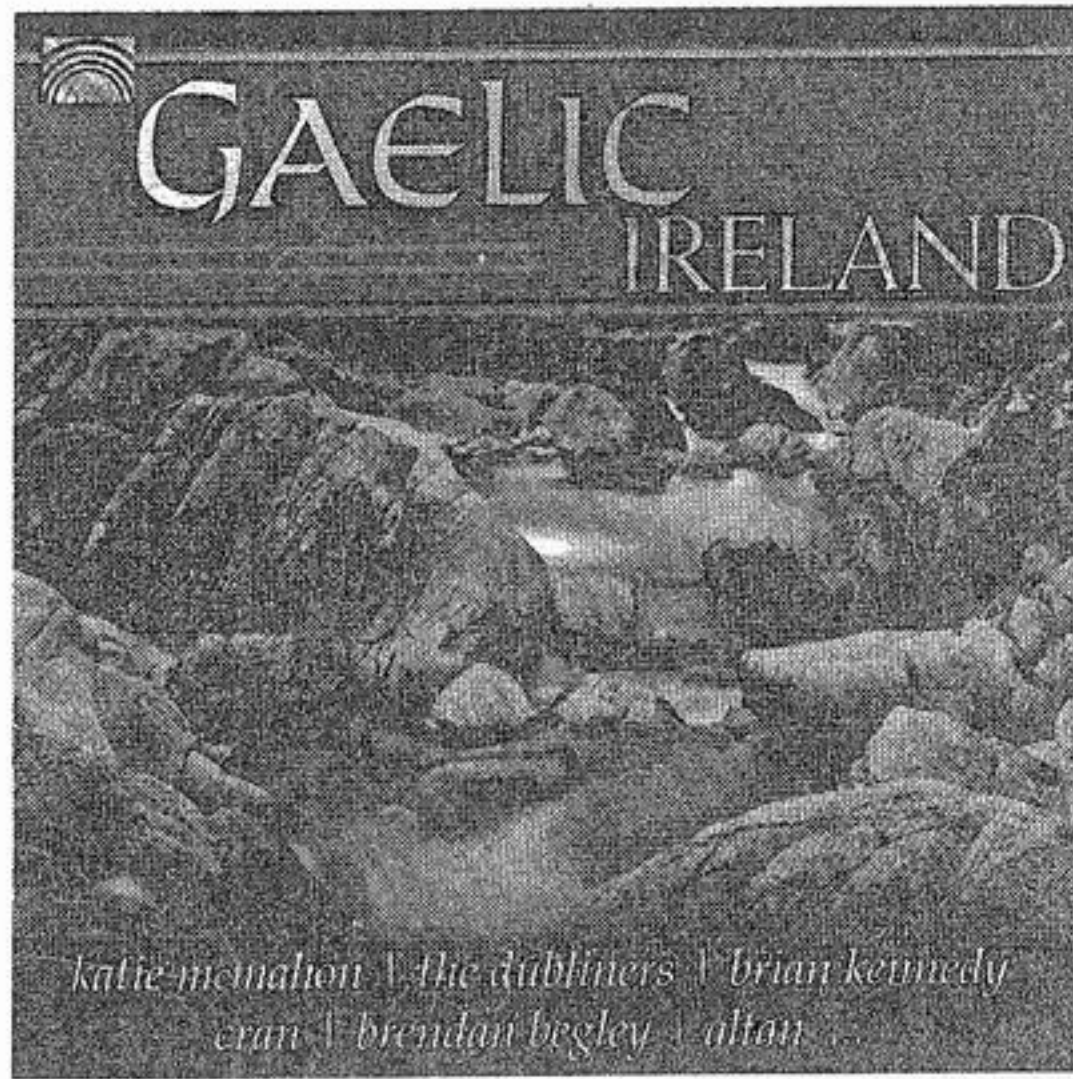
ARC Music commissioned the

album and John as compiler remembers, "The early 2000's was a unique time when there were huge changes in the music industry." Irish artists in the folk and traditional field were beginning to release their own

songwriter Ger Wolfe, he had a version of Bruach na Carraige Baine on the CD. I asked Ger if I could license that track from him for the album. The same happened with Sliabh Na mBan which was covered by Brendan Begley

on his CD. I met Brian Kennedy while he was living in Limerick. He was doing a project for BBC NI called A History of Irish Song and made his Irish language version of 'Táimse 'im Chodladh' available."

John eventually had an album of 18 tracks of which only six were licensed from record companies. The rest were from the artists themselves. There is an unusual track called 'Eochail' on the



*katie mcMahon | the dubliners | brian kennedy  
cran | brendan begley | altan*

recordings so instead of following the usual route of licensing all the songs from the established record companies, John contacted many of the artists directly, "I received a CD from Cork singer/

album from Daithi O'Sé who is now a household name from his work on RTÉ television. John says, "You don't normally get a chance to hear him singing but he comes from a well known traditional Irish music family in



**Journalist John O'Regan**

West Kerry. And again it was a version of the song I was looking for."

The beauty in the Irish language, the imagery and the stories going through the songs is what drew John to compile this collection. He concludes, "It was a fascinating process to put this album of classic Gaelic songs together. Some of the songs were around for two to three 100 years and some were brand new at the time. I am thrilled that it is being re-released. Its an album that still stands up today, the songs do the work as far as I'm concerned."

Gaelic Ireland, first released in 2003 is available again in all good record shops and from the record company website <http://www.arcmusic.co.uk/>