



MEDIA RELEASE

Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, renowned known composer and pianist, and Nicholas Carolan to give free public recital/lecture on 17th and 18th century Irish music. Event to take place in National Library on Wednesday evening 13 February

On Wednesday evening 13 February, **Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Professor of Music at the University of Limerick and internationally known as a composer and pianist**, will give a free public recital/lecture and play a selection of melodies from the earliest ever collection of Irish music *Celebrated Irish Tunes*, including several pieces by the famous 17th century blind harper Turlough Carolan.

The recital/lecture titled *The First Collection of Irish Music, Dublin 1724* will take place in the Seminar Room, National Library of Ireland at 7pm.

Admission is free and no booking is required.

Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin will be joined by **Nicholas Carolan, Director of the Irish Traditional Music Archive in Dublin and RTÉ and TG4 television presenter**. Nicholas Carolan will sketch the historical and social background to the collection.

The earliest ever collection of Irish music, *A Collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes Proper for the Violin, German Flute or Hautboy*, was published in 1724 in the yard of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin. The publishers were musical instrument makers John and William Neal, a father and son who dominated the Dublin music trade in the first half of the 18th century.

The collection contains 49 tunes, and was sold for the “new and fashionable instruments – the violin, German flute and oboe”. However, on examination, the collection has been proven to consist almost entirely of traditional Irish harp music and the melodies of traditional Irish language songs, many with titles in Irish. These tunes were current 300 years ago and differ in many ways from the Irish traditional

music of today. The famous blind harper Turlough Carolan, who composed several of them, was alive at the time of the tunes' publication in Ireland. Many of the tunes reveal a surprising sympathy for the defeated but still powerful Jacobite cause.

While only one original copy of *Celebrated Irish Tunes* has survived, a new facsimile reprint of the collection has been published by the Irish Traditional Music Archive with an extensive introduction, song texts and notes.

For people attending this free event who would like to make a contribution towards the cost of piano hire, the National Library of Ireland (NLI) is suggesting a donation of €5. Donation boxes are located in all NLI buildings.

Ends

For further information, contact Brenda O'Hanlon, O'Hanlon Media, on 087 258 3292