



CHRISTIAN BÄHRENS

IRISH SONATA,  
FOR FLUTE SOLO



NORSK MUSIKKFORLAG ½



## Preface

I was a teenager when I first came to England and stayed as a language student with an Irish family. Only a few years later I visited them in Dublin where they had returned to, and I enjoyed not only the Irish football final but also a number of musical gatherings in the local pubs. I immediately fell in love with Irish folk music and always enjoyed it when I came to Ireland on holiday. One year I went to Clifden with a friend and met Eileen Coohill and her parents. Her father Peter was very active as singer and guitarist, took me to several music events and introduced me to the music of Christy Moore. This wonderful musician gave a stunning concert in Berlin the same summer, and that is when I fell in love with „Black is the colour“, the only song in this sonata which is of Scottish origin.

Since I was as student I have frequently visited Britain or Ireland and always enjoyed being there and seeing my friends, and I was not surprised about my strong affinities when I found out that one of my female ancestors, who lived in Beethoven's time, was Anglo-Irish. As a choral conductor I have frequently performed English music and as a composer I have also been keen to create new pieces on English poetry. Only some weeks ago the idea came up to write an instrumental piece which covers Irish songs, a number of them standard repertoire for my work as teacher at Beethoven-Gymnasium.

The sonata is basically written for clarinet, which is not typical for Irish folk music but offers wonderful sounds and enables more musicians to get to know and play Irish music. We have also prepared special versions for flute and violin. In all five movements I owe very much to the musical heritage and used my inspiration to combine, to vary and to develop the melodies further, and I am most thankful if the sonata brings joy to all who play or listen to it.

Christian Bährens, Berlin – May 2021

*Duration: 19 min – 1. Flute version & 2. Clarinet (or Violin) version: Norsk Musikforlag, Oslo*

## The songs in order of appearance

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| First movement  | Down by the sally gardens<br>All around my hat<br>The leaving of Liverpool          |
| Second movement | Black is the colour<br>Red is the rose<br>Dingle bay<br>Dirty old town              |
| Third movement  | Finnegan's wake<br>The fields of Athenry<br>The parting glass<br>Whiskey in the jar |
| Fourth movement | Wild rover<br>Four green fields<br>Cockles and Mussels                              |
| Fifth movement  | Danny Boy<br>The foggy dew  |