

TOMMY SANDS

Arising from *the Troubles*

With Moya & Fionán

The songs

01	Song of Erin	4:07	3
02	A Stone's Throw *Featuring Moya*	3:30	5
03	The Mixed Marriage *With Dolores Keane*	2:46	7
04	We'll Sing It All Over	3:58	8
05	Bloody Sunday *Featuring Moya*	2:45	11
06	Have You Seen Joe Cahill	3:09	12
07	The Road to Aughnacloy	3:43	15
08	A Call to Hope	2:39	16
09	You Sold Us Down the River	3:00	16
10	Troubles	3:24	17
11	The Bessbrook Lament *Featuring Moya*	3:24	18
12	All the Little Children	3:32	20
13	Sailing Through the Sky	3:52	22
14	A Quiet Man (The Ballad of John Hume)	5:11	23
15	The Music of Healing	3:42	26
16	Carry On	3:18	29
17	Silent No Longer *Featuring Moya*	3:22	31
18	The Lagan Side	4:15	32

The Muralists · 33

Acknowledgements · 35

Special guests & contact · 36

01 Song of Erin

4:07

This is a kind of album overture and a four minute potted history of Ireland from mythological mists to present realities. The first verse refers to ancient tales, copied by Christian monks but told before books were written. Erin, the goddess of the magical Tuaithe De Danann, welcomes the Milesians but she can't stop the battle that rages between the two groups. In the evening multitudes are slain but the next morning the dead arise and fight on better than ever. Eventually having concluded that they can never defeat each other they make a division of the island giving the day and everything above the ground to the more mundane Milesians and giving the night and everything below the ground to the De Dannan who seemed content since they were spirit people anyway.

Kings and Popes dominate history after that and poor people's very survival often depended on following whatever flag or crosier that was waved at them. Borders were raised and pacts were made as minorities on both sides kept their heads down and Majoritarianism ruled Democracy. In the North there was rising and falling until one morning in early Good Friday 1998 we arose with a mutual understanding that the spirit of Peace could be best achieved not by what we could beat out of each other but by what we could afford to give to each other.

SONG OF ERIN

I'll sing a song of Erin goddess of the land
Milesians and De Danann fight to win her hand
They cannot beat each other but agree to share her name
That story was recorded when the Christians came

This Celtic Christianity grows away from Rome
Pope Adrian of England says Henry bring them home
A papal laudabiliter would sanctify the plan
Save their soul and to take their land

What's around the corner
Not forgetting saying nothing
What's around the corner
Second guessing history lessons
For tomorrow morning

Another day another way another Henry now
His highness and his holiness they have a blazing row
Ulster must be planted Natives want revenge
To hell or to Connaught Cromwell says

Remember 1690 liberty for all
Apart that is from all the penal laws
A famine followed after that never should have been
Children's children remember Skibbereen

Each and Every generation rising up again
Martyr's blood is Pearse's flame
Isolated Loyalist in a fearful state
Charged with keeping the Catholic in his place
Civil rights are calling out burning for a change
Loyalists are calling it the thin edge of the wedge
RUC 'n B men or is it UDA Bombay Street and the IRA

Compromise is treachery that's what you hear them say
You're with us or against us there is no other way
But how can we have freedom if our neighbour is not free
It makes us only half of what we all can be
Gather round the table we all must have a say
Friday is a good time to begin another way
Darkness it is fading time to face the day
Who will rise and walk away, have we found another way

02 A Stone’s Throw

Featuring Moya 3:30

Often people ask why there was trouble in Northern Ireland. One could just as validly ask "How could there not have been trouble?" We lived within a stone's throw of each other but we went to different schools, we learned different histories and we played different games. We didn't know each other.

If people know each other before a row starts it's much easier to resolve it. There are now more mixed and integrated schools. Unlike me, my daughter Moya went to a mixed school. During the highly charged marching season a few years ago in a local divided village her Catholic friends urged her to leave quickly before the Orange band arrived on the street or else they could be in trouble. It was too late. The band suddenly appeared but instead of aggression many were waving to her with a smile. They had been in the same class together. Everything was different.

A STONE’S THROW

I was only three years old and you were nearly five
Playing in the daisies in the early Summer time
Your father in his meadow he was working at the hay
And mine was in another one doing much the same

And so we grew together a stone's throw from each other

They marched in two directions when the holidays would come
Commemorating difference to the rattle of the drum
But wars were not for making when there's harvest to be done
And they'd always help each other when the threshing man would come

And I was barely seven years and you were nearly nine
Toddling off to different schools and toeing different lines
One admired an empire with its kings and queens so brave
The other told of rebels bold who fought them tooth and nail

I see you on the other side you lead an angry band
You look in our direction and a stone is in your hand
I don't know should I wave at you or would you understand
But as you turn your head away the stone falls from your hand



Moya Sands

03 The Mixed Marriage

With Dolores Keane 2:46

Sometimes it is humour and having a laugh at ourselves that help us cope. Too often we search for logical solutions to bring us together when there is nothing logical about us being so apart in the first place.. One of the first folk songs I heard was about a frog getting married to a mouse. Even as a child I thought that must have been very complicated...certainly from a religious point of view. Later when a friend of mine got married to one of the Other Sort in the Northern Irish context I realized that the frog and the mouse affair was very simple in comparison. "Wisdom is a butterfly not a gloomy bird of prey"

THE MIXED MARRIAGE

Lady can I take you walking we'll get married then
Maybe we can do some talking we'll get married then
First I must know where you come from
Where do you go of a Sunday morning
What foot do you dig with darling we'll get married then

We'll get married then we'll get married then
When Santa Claus shaves off his whiskers
We'll get married then

When the Pope allows divorce we'll get married then
Dislodge King Billy from his horse and we'll get married then
Oh you're so full of bigotry your narrow eyes they cannot see
Why can't you be more like me we'll get married then

When little babies do not cry we'll get married the
When politicians do not lie we'll get married then
I'm not one to be contrary but what's you stance on the Virgin Mary
Does your God shave or is he beardy we'll get married then

When a Prod becomes the Pope of Rome we'll get married then
When a Catholic sits on an English throne we'll get married then
When Ian Paisley drinks a whiskey with young Bernadette McAliskey
That's the day that I will kiss you we'll get married then

Articles 2 and 3 must go and we'll get married then
The Government of Ireland Act also we'll get married then
Aren't we getting slightly technical couldn't we be a bit more practical
If I thought you really liked me we'll get married then

Don't you know I love you dearly we'll get married then
No matter what the neighbours say we'll get married then
We can't stop the world from fighting but love can start the world uniting
How about tonight at midnight we'll get married then

04 We'll Sing It All Over

3:58

The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement began in 1968 with five basic demands: One man, one vote; an end to gerrymandering; an end to discrimination in housing; an end to discrimination in jobs and the disbandment of the B-Specials.

It had initial support from a wide embrace of the community, Ivan Cooper, a Protestant was one of the early leaders but the Northern Ireland government of the time regarded the movement as a front for Republicanism and Communism. Many Loyalists regarded it as the thin edge of the wedge in the struggle for a United Ireland. Like in all movements towards equality and change, those who were liable to gain were enthusiastic and those who might lose were suspicious.

I wrote this song as a kind of anthem for the Civil Rights movement and with the Sands Family sang it during a very tense night in Newry, October 1971. British soldiers had shot dead three local youths, whom I had known at school, and the town was in an uproar. An unofficial curfew was imposed, the lights were turned off and people were afraid to come out on the streets. In

the darkness we began to sing this song in answer to a request from Civil Rights leaders. Slowly people returned to the streets and joined us. Soon afterwards the lights were switched back on again.

WE'LL SING IT ALL OVER

We've been to school we've learned the rules
We learned them on a Saturday and now we know the truth
We're on our way, we demand fair play
We'll march for it we'll sit for it we'll sing for it all day

We'll sing it all over we'll sing it down under
We'll sing it wherever we can
In mountains and highways in valleys and byways
We'll sing it all over the land

We're on the bru, that's nothing new*
Our daddies and our mammies and our grannies were there too
But we've been to school we've learned the rules
A man has the right for to live as he should

The world will hear our call Civil Rights for all
It's singing from the rooftops and it's written on the walls
A house where we can live, a job to pay the bills
A vote to give us hope for the future of our children

So just don't stand and stare you can do your share
No matter what religion or the colour of your hair
The wrong has to cease the right must prevail
Even though they lift us and they lock us in the jail

*bru = unemployment


CIVIL RIGHTS
ONE MAN ONE VOTE
JOBS NOT CREED
ANTI SECTARIAN

05 Bloody Sunday

Featuring Moya 2:45

Sunday 30 January was the day that the struggle for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland by peaceful means was destroyed forever. Fourteen innocent marchers were shot dead by British Paratroopers in Derry. As a result hundreds of young people rushed to join the IRA.

BLOODY SUNDAY

They were walking they were talking they were laughing they were singing
They were calling out for Civil Rights and Freedom
And hope was on the banner that was floating in the breeze
All upon that Sunday bloody Sunday

And as the years roll on, I still can't believe you're gone

They were walking with their lovers they were talking to their friends
They were dreaming of a better future dawning
But who could tell the darkness would descend upon their dreams
All upon that Sunday bloody Sunday

A gunshot and a burst of blood 'Sweet Jesus' someone cried
A lad of seventeen was lying dying
And thirteen more would follow him before the day was done
A curse upon that Sunday bloody Sunday

They were walking they were talking they were laughing they were singing
They were calling out for Civil Rights and Freedom
But now it was a flag of blood left hanging in the air
A curse upon that Sunday bloody Sunday

06 Have You Seen Joe Cahill

3:09

The Official Republican movement had replaced their armed nationalist struggle for a unifying working class and political one by the time Bombay Street in Belfast was being burned by Loyalists in 1969. The Provisional IRA was formed and found support for defence purposes and Joe Cahill, a veteran of earlier campaigns became the name synonymous with the early 'Provos'. This song which looks at the perception of 'Freedom Fighter', 'Terrorist' and Family man was written and sung while Cahill was 'on the run' after Internment was introduced in 1972.

HAVE YOU SEEN JOE CAHILL

Have you seen Joe Cahill
Have you seen him anywhere
Somewhere he is near us
Tell me if you can do you know this man
Is he a foe or a friend
That is wanted in this land

All along the Falls will they rally to the call
Time to join in the IRA
If no one will defend us we've some one to depend on
This is what you can hear them say

Have you seen Joe Cahill
Have you seen him anywhere
Somewhere he is near us
With his gallant band
He'll help to free our land
He'll save the little children in arms
And may God Bless Ireland.

The mighty British Army are searching all the land
Where is this rebel more a devil than a man
With his mayhem and murder it's time hand him over
This what you can hear them say

Have you seen Joe Cahill
Have you seen him anywhere
Somewhere he is near us
With his cruel band he'll terrorise the land
He'll kill the little children in arms
We will leave no stone unturned

In the lonely home Annie lies alone
All the little children are asleep in their bed
His footstep on the floor
His knock upon the door
This is what you can hear them say

Have you seen Joe Cahill
Have you seen him anywhere
Somewhere he is near us
But he's always on the run,
There's too much to be done
To hold the little children in his arms
And it's lonely here alone

Have you seen Joe Cahill
Have you seen him anywhere
Somewhere he is near us
With his gallant band
He'll terrorise the land
He'll hold the little children when he can
And may God bless Ireland



Mural by Mark Ervine depicting Lord Carson signing the Ulster Covenant in 1912



Mural by Danny Devenny

07 The Road to Aughnacloy

3:43

The mainly Protestant Royal Ulster Constabulary were charged with keeping the peace by, and for, the Northern Ireland Unionist government. Defined by Catholics as anti-Nationalist and sometimes by Protestants as 'not Unionist enough,' they often found themselves in the firing line from all sides.

This is a beautifully written ballad in the traditional vein from the pen of my good friend John Connery, recalling the human emotions and life changing moments surrounding an ambush that took place near Aughnacloy in Co Tyrone.

THE ROAD TO AUGHNACLOY

It was on a winter's morning, to the border we where bound
We went up Clogher valley and on to Fivemiletown
A two day stint at O.P's didn't fill our hearts with joy*
But we laughed and joked and bantered on the road to Aughnacloy

There was big Jim Crooks and Sandy the boy from county Down
Myself and oul' Willy Walker were both from Belfast town
That man would not stop complaining, he acted just like a boy
But we carried on regardless on the road to Aughnacloy

It was cold, as we marched along, each one thought of home
But duty was upon us and for that we dare not roam
We walked into an ambush intending us to destroy
The shots rang out like cannons on the road to Aughnacloy

I saw oul' Willy falling and clutching hold of his thigh
Big Jimmy slumped onto the ground and with his dying cry
He shouted to us "take cover", but Sandy the wee Banbridge boy
Died in my arms soon after, on the road to Aughnacloy

Oh why had I to live on and suffer the cruel sight
Of watching my three comrades slain without as much as a fight
I'll never forget big Jimmy or oul' Willy and the wee Banbridge boy
As I go on a family outing along the road to Aughnacloy

*OP = Observation post

08 A Call to Hope

2:39

This piece of music was born out of troubled times. At the deadline hour of midnight at Stormont Castle Parliament Buildings 1998 when no news was emerging from The Talks, a TV man, with a live camera running on his shoulder, asked me to play something. Memories of bitter days gone by were in my mind but when I put the whistle in my mouth I had no idea what would come out. This was the tune that emerged and which I later learned from the TV recording.

INSTRUMENTAL

09 You Sold Us Down the River

3:00

I wrote this song in early 1975 after a long conversation with a Protestant neighbour about disillusionment felt by many Working Class Unionists at being set up and let down by the British Ascendancy tradition. He had a lovely local way of singing and I tried to sing the song in that spirit.

YOU SOLD US DOWN THE RIVER

You promised that you'd stand by me from the very start
And you told our sons and daughters to be loyal
You have not further use for me you've gone and broke my heart
And you sold us down the river in the end

You sold us down the river you sold us down the river
You sold us down the river in the end

You planted us in Ireland to keep it safe and sure
And always keep the British flag a flying
You have no further use for me you've gone and broke my heart
And you sold us down the river

And when the rebels came along from Derry to Belfast
The ones who always laughed about being Loyal
You took away our parliament
You gave them all they asked
And you sold us down the river in the end

The day is fast approaching when the Ulster working man
Will seek and find a more faithful lover
For every pound you gave to us you took ten back again
And you sold us down the river in the end.

10 Troubles

3:24

BBC producer John Leonard, when reviving the Ewan McColl/Charles Parker Radio Ballad idea in 2008, asked me to write a number of songs reflecting on 'The Troubles'. This is one which recalls the dark uncertainty of that time...the sound of a strange car on a lonely road, the unfamiliar knock on the door and the dreading of what might happen next.

TROUBLES

Someone died on Sunday the funeral was today
Tonight there will be trouble someone's going to pay
Don't go out tonight love its better that you stay
For anything can happen in these Troubles

He seemed so young and innocent so gentle and so kind
It broke his mother's heart you know the night that poor lad died
Don't go out tonight love there'll be some other time
For anything can happen in these Troubles

They might be dressed in uniforms respectable and clean
They might be dressed in anoraks and ordinary jeans
But murder is their mission in the night unseen
Anything can happen in these Troubles

They didn't hear the car draw near or hear the doorbell ring
They didn't hear the gun go off the begging or the crying
The blood lay on the kitchen floor but they didn't hear a thing
For anything can happen in these Troubles

11 The Bessbrook Lament

Featuring Moya 3:24

I wrote this song about ten Protestant workmen from Bessbrook shot dead by Republicans near Kingsmills in Co Armagh. The massacre was said to be in retaliation for an earlier one by Loyalists of six Catholic men, The O'Dowds from Gilford and the Reavey Brothers from Newtownhamilton.

A friend of mine, Alan Black, left for dead at Kingsmills with 19 bullets in his body told me about meeting and becoming friends in Daisy Hill Hospital, Newry with the youngest of the Reaveys, Anthony, who had also been left for dead. Alan was heartbroken when Anthony died a few weeks later.

THE BESSBROOK LAMENT

Cold blows the wind round the cold stone spring
And gently falls the rain
Down by the brook where young Bess did sing
There's sorrow and sadness and pain

It's sad and it's bad it's the ten working lads
Who'll never get up in the morning
And there's hardly a sound round Bessbrook town
But the young girls lamenting and mourning

There's been many's a happy song sung by manys a happy lass
Down in the village Linen Mill
But everything's wrong now the music has gone
Even the river stands still

Old John Grub the Quaker he made his model town
No pubs nor police nor pawn
But there is no law that can mend a broken heart
No drink that can ease their pain

And who is to blame and where is the shame
Somebody tell me why
The spiral of vengeance it turns and it turns
And so do the Innocent die

12 All the Little Children

3:32

The events of Bloody Sunday persuaded a multitude of young men towards joining the IRA. Many felt there was now no other way to achieve a "lasting peace". Later David Ervine would tell me that Bloody Friday (a day of IRA bombing in Belfast) had persuaded him to join the UVF. It is likely I could have gone that way too had it not been for a conversation with a friend, involved in previous campaigns. If I wanted to do something for peace, he said, then write a song instead. In a dark time I could only look towards some light from the future so I wrote this song. I called it "All the little children".

ALL THE LITTLE CHILDREN

Little children hiding in the shadows
Waiting for the changing of the day
Watching for a break between the showers
When they can go out and start to play

And we're singing of the times
When the sun will always shone
And armoured cars and tanks will fade away
People will be one and the fighting will be done
And all the little children they can play

I can hear you saying it's impossible
Just look at the blood upon the road
But I don't think that it's impossible
For now we see that all our blood is red

It seems that cure is better than prevention
If not then Doctor John would have no pay
And all the kings and queens would have no pensions
If all the little children they did play

I don't suppose a man will stop his struggling
If he's lying with his back upon the ground
It's only when everyone is standing
That peace and justice can be found



Sands Family, 1970: Tommy, Ben, Anne, Eugene “Dino” and Colum

13 Sailing Through the Sky

3:52

Prisons have always played a major role in Irish History. Prisoners in “the Troubles” regarded by many as a major part of the problem would also become a major part of the solution. In the '60s, Loyalist prisoners like Gusty Spence would campaign with Republicans to create better conditions for both and in so doing learn more about each other's traditions and points of view. In the 90's British Secretary of State Mo Mowlam would visit prisoners to give assurances for moves in The Peace Process. After the Prisoner Releases many would come together from both sides and have the Street Credibility to lead a peaceful way forward in their own communities. Internment and the Hunger strikes would have a major impact all around the world.

This simple song, which has now been translated into Danish, Arabic and Hebrew, was inspired while performing in Maghagaberry prison after meeting a prisoner who described his long dreamful journeys despite being incarcerated in a small cell.

SAILING THROUGH THE SKY

I'll sing you a song of a lark in the morning
Sailing through the sky
Sailing forever above the Black Mountain
Sailing through the sky

Sailing sailing
Sailing through the sky
Sailing sailing
Sailing through the sky

The jailer comes round and he bids me good morning
Sailing through the sky
But already I've gone to the fair in Rathfriland
Sailing through the sky

Sometimes I go down to the 'Bridge on a Saturday
Sailing through the sky
Stand in the sunshine with Wee Tarry Flanagan
Watching the girls go by

The jailer comes round to lock up in the evening
Sailing through the sky
But I've gone out walking with young Katie Houlihan
Sailing through the sky

Do you still miss me, will you still wait for me
Sailling through the sky
Will you give me a reason to wake in the morning
Sailing through the sky

14 A Quiet Man (The Ballad of John Hume)

5:11

A few years ago the words of my good friend and journalist Barry Turley moved me to write this song. So many monuments have been laid and songs made in praise of those who led us into war, yet so few in praise of those who have moved us towards peace. In times of war it is the peace maker who becomes the real rebel. This is a song about one such man.

A QUIET MAN (THE BALLAD OF JOHN HUME)

Oh I was 17 and I was running wild
I was troubled and I was terrified
When I saw them lying dying at my feet
On that Sunday bloody Sunday street
And he was calling out for peace again
I said we've walked and we have talked and things don't ever change
Don't you know they know no language but the one
That's the language from the barrel of a gun

I have heard songs sung of highwaymen and holy men
Of heroes right or wrong who never lost a fight
But I sing my song for a man who never asked for one
A quiet man who saved my life

And he kept saying there's another way
Let's spill our sweat and not our blood to make things change
Flying flags will never feed a hungry child
They will only raise the borders in our mind
And I was hearing but not listening when he said
Don't die for Ireland please live for it instead
For all I knew we had to do what must be done
Just one more push and this bloody war is won

And when my time it came for joining in that fight
I had prepared myself for dying on that night
Then someone shouted from the kitchen to the room
Look what's happening on the television news
He was weeping uncontrollably and wild
Like a giant standing crying like a child
And then suddenly I recognised those tears
They were mine that had been lost for all years

And there were tears that filled the rivers and the sea
There were tears that cried for justice and for peace
Crying no one needs to lose nor to give in
They were saying there's a way we all can win

Don't talk to terrorists I heard some people cry
He said I'll talk if it will save one single life
It's just an accident of birth where we are born
On the nearside or the far side of that wall

And I can see him now like it's just yesterday
And it brings be down the long and lonely days
You may not remember me I know it's true
But I remember you John Hume



A bloodied Ivan Cooper MP being assisted by John Hume MP (left) and leading activist Eamonn McCann (writer of intro on back of this CD) with unknown ambulance man

15 The Music of Healing

3:42

This song, written and recorded with the help of my inspiring friend and mentor Pete Seeger from the USA in 1995, would soon lend its name and purpose to an annual seminar/session concept which would travel from Ireland to the Middle East and other regions of conflict. 'The Music of Healing', initially chaired by Rostrevor neighbour and current Irish President Mary McAleese uses music and art to create an atmosphere of neighbourliness and humanity thus making it more possible for politicians and former combatants to discuss difficult and divisive issues. In 1996 we moved to Belfast and held "The Citizen's Assembly", a people's gathering representing every political and paramilitary grouping to discuss new methods of Concensus Decision making.

At the "Music of Healing" event in 2008 with Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams. At the event, Pete's grandson Tao Rodriguez-Seeger sang one of Pete's songs. Tao also performs on this recording as well as Vedran Smailovic, the celebrated 'Cellist of Sarajevo.'

THE MUSIC OF HEALING

Don't beat the drum; that frightens the children.
Don't sing the songs about winning and losing.
Sit down beside me. The green fields are bleeding.
Sing me the music of healing.

Sing me a song of a lover returning,
The darker the night, the nearer the morning,
Bring me the news of a new day that's dawning.
Sing me the music of healing.

Ah, the heart's a wonder,
Stronger than the guns of thunder.
Even when we're torn asunder,
Love will come again.

Sometimes the truth's like a hare in a cornfield.
You know that it's there, but you can't put your arms round it
All you can hope for is to follow its footprints.
Sing me the music of healing.

Who would have thought I could feel so contented
To learn I was wrong after all of my rambles?
I've learned to be hard and I've learned how to tremble
Sing me the music of healing.

Somehow the cycle of vengeance keeps turning
'Til each other's sorrows and songs we start learning.
Peace is the prize for those who are daring.
Sing me the music of healing.

Time is your friend. it cures all your sorrows.
But how can I wait for another tomorrow?
One step today, and a thousand will follow.
Sing me the music of healing.



With Pete, Moya and Fionán at Great Pumpkin Festival of Beacon, 2010



At the "Music of Healing" event in 2008 with Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams.

16 Carry On

3:18

The week of the Good Friday Agreement was a very tense time. The politicians were under severe pressure. They were worried not about their opponents but about their supporters. It was like two trains meeting on a narrow bridge and neither driver wanted to give way because they didn't want to let down their passengers. It was only when the passengers got up and went to the driver and said 'look it's alright you can go back a bit because we all want to go forward'. It was only then that the political landscape began to change.

The TV didn't help much either. Television can't deal with peace very well. If you put a calm sea and a blue sky on a TV screen and hold that shot for more than five seconds people will be getting their remote controls searching for storms. For TV is about moving pictures not still ones. My friend Vedran Smailovic, the cellist of Sarajevo, was sitting at home with me discussing these things. We decided to create a storm for the six o'clock news. With Protestant and Catholic children from Dundrum in Co Down, Robbie Dinsmore, Roy Arbuckle's Different drums and my late great friend Davy Hammond we headed with a new song for Stormont Castle. The Talks were faltering so we just needed the chorus to be heard, to "Carry on" with talking.

When the politicians inside heard us they came out and joined in the chorus. John Hume, David Trimble, Gerry Adams, David Ervine and all the others. Later Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon would describe the sound of the children singing as “a decisive moment”.

CARRY ON

We are standing by this castle fine
In a hopeful Belfast breeze
With a song that's new and a call for you
To try again for peace

Carry on carry on, you can hear the people singing
Carry on carry on, 'til peace will come again

All the lonely years of sorrow
Let the tears be not in vain
We can build a new tomorrow
And everyone can gain

In the Bogside and the Waterside
In the Shankill and the Falls
All around the hills of Ulster
You can hear them sing this song

Don't betray your children's birthright
That's the right to stay alive
For there is no greater treachery
Than to let your children die



Meeting Loyalist leader Gusty Spence at the Good Friday Belfast agreement. Included in the picture are singing children from both sides, Steve Matier and Vedran Smailovic

17 Silent No Longer

Featuring Moya 3:22

This song was inspired by a group of young people from Loyalist East Belfast and Nationalist West Belfast.

SILENT NO LONGER

Treated like children never should have been
Seen but never heard told how to feel
By a legacy of bitterness difficult to shed
Never trust the others there's no more to be said

I'll be silent no longer I'll be heard I'll be seen
Since the boys of Ballymurphy met the girls of Ballybeen
I'll be silent no longer I'll be silent no longer

Peeping through the window as the minibus slowed down
Strange girls and boys from the other end of town
Thinking of the question but the answer said it all
How are you doing...I'm not too bad at all

You'll never get me dancing with a weapon in your hand
Charm me with a reason and I'll dance to beat the band
I'll show to you a step or two you never seen before
Gently move together and discover what's in store

Come listen politician whosoever you may be
Don't wrap the flag around you when electioneering me
I want peace around the table and a way to earn my bread
A sharing of the roses and a place to lay my head

I'll be silent no longer I'll be heard I'll be seen
Since the boys of Ballymurphy met the girls of Ballybeen
There's a new generation a new kind of dream
Since the boys of Ballymurphy met the girls of Ballybeen
I'll be silent no longer I'll be silent no longer

18 The Lagan Side

4:15

I sang this song for the first time to celebrate the new diversity and the opening of the Belfast's Waterfront Hall on the banks of the Lagan. On stage was Janet Harbison's Belfast Harp Orchestra, The Field Marshall Montgomery Pipe Band and Vedran Smailovic from Sarajevo. During the week of the Good Friday Agreement we sang it many times and many times later.

THE LAGAN SIDE

Well, I thought she was a vision that stopped me with her smile
Down by the river, we walked along in style
She says: you're welcome back again - and won't you stay awhile
Down by the Lagan side.

And when we dance, we'll dance together
When we cry, we'll hold each other
And when we love, we'll love forever
Down by the Lagan side.

I said: who owns that music, so full of joy and pain
That the pipers and the harpers and the Lambeg drummers play
She said: who owns the teardrops, falling in the rain
Down by the Lagan side.

And do you not remember, we once walked side by side
And the bells of Belfast city sang harmony and pride
The past it has been taken, but the future's yours and mine
Down by the Lagan side.

ART & COMMUNITY

The Muralists

If the folk song gives a voice to the people in the street then the mural gives us a canvas in the most accessible gallery of all...the street corner. With one eye on the wall and the other across their shoulder anonomous muralists have famously mapped the mood of their own community from times of war towards times of peace. Recently in East Belfast I was drawn to a mural strewn with poppies which suddenly shouted "Peace cannot be maintained by force but only by understanding". I immediately went in search of its origin to discover a bunch of teenagers from both sides of the divide, an organisation entitled Ambassadors for Peace and community activists like Frankie Gallagher, John Hoey and Stephen Hughes. John Stewart was the muralist who executed their vision. Later they all headed for An Culturlann in West Belfast to do a similiar one but instead of poppies which is a perceived British emblem of Remembrance they would paint Irish Easter lilies. Together with Belfast's most famous muralist Danny Devanney and Marty Lyons came the seemingly simple but profoundly powerful idea that the lily and poppy grow side by side.

The mural on the cover of this CD, painted in a traditionally fierce flashpoint area of Belfast, acknowledges the mutual suffering of the past and celebrates the hopeful rising together of both sides and all sides in a peaceful future. The pictures in this booklet include work from well-known Loyalist muralist Mark Ervine (son of the late Loyalist leader David Ervine) (p14) and a Danny Devenny Republican depiction of Joe Cahill (p14).



With young volunteer painters in front of Danny Devenny's mural. Photo by Moore Sinnerton

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Mark Ervine and Danny Devenny

Special guests

The Sands Family: Anne, Ben, Colum and 'Dino'; Pete Seeger, Tao Rodriguez Seeger, Dolores Keane, Steve Cooney, Arty McGlynn, Donal Lunny, Bojan Andic, John Fitzpatrick, Lisa Gutkin, Greg Anderson, Richard Parkes, Liam Bradley, Rod McVey, Different Drums, Tom Newman, Andy Seward, John Tams, Andy Cutting, John McCusker

CONTACT

tommysands.com

info@tommysands.com