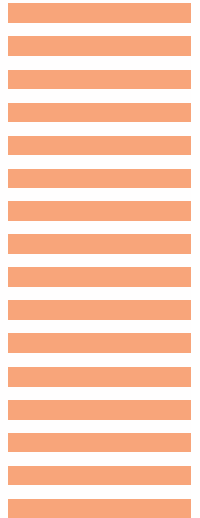




*Ilse
de Ziah*

"Irish Airs for
Solo Cello"



For the past few years Ilse has performed solo cello recitals and her show From Irish Airs to Australia Fair is an expressive, 'out-of-the-ordinary'

performance of Irish Airs and contemporary cello pieces composed and arranged by Ilse, performed on modern and Baroque cello. Taking inspiration from the Irish and Australian landscapes Ilse creates a fresh, lyrical and emotional style of cello music.

"Well known and lesser known Irish airs sing gloriously in their new raiment.

Modern compositional techniques create ancient ethereal atmospheres and earthy moods. A magical musical journey to lose and find yourself. Ilse touches the cello and her soul reaches out to your heart, your future and an infinite past."

Her solo debut Irish Airs for Solo Cello presented a calling card to audiences in Ireland. Now with the imminent release of Solace in Darkness this extends Ilse's world-wide appeal as it speaks of her connection to the landscapes and experiences of her travels and heritage beyond Ireland.

Ilse de Ziah was born in Connecticut, USA, where she started music theory classes and sat for hours under the piano listening to her mother play Chopin and Bach. From seven she grew up in Sydney, Australia where over the years she had lessons in piano, cello, pipe organ, harpsichord, recorder and violin.

+ Ilse de Ziah is a composer, arranger and improviser, a classical, baroque and folk musician. With accomplished musicianship and exquisite soul, Ilse de Ziah evokes music that is intimate and genuine, music she reveals in playing of striking purity and undeniable magic. With a strong memory for learning whole musical works, the ability to play cello standing up, an ingenious improviser and having worked in many genres of music as cellist, singer, arranger and composer, Ilse makes for a versatile and compelling performer.

Q: When did you start playing the cello?

A: I played piano since I was 7, but when I was 12 I was sitting in a concert of the Sydney Youth Orchestra and my sisters were both playing in it on violin and clarinet. I realised I wanted to play with others, not just alone at the piano. I whispered this to my mum and she said, just choose an instrument and you can learn it. I sat there excited and enthralled, listening to each instrument. The cello won.

Q: What was your biggest inspiration to begin with?

A: Had a constant flow of music as a child, and I loved sitting under the grand piano as my mother played. The little ledges and shelves were my secret hiding places and hearing the huge resonance from under the soundboard was always soothing and uplifting. As long as the music was being played there was no trouble... I wanted piano lessons from as early as I remember, but I was told I was too young, so at 4 I had theory lessons with a friend and I loved it. We'd clap rhythms and sing harmonies and put stickers and buttons on the pages. When I finally started cello at 12, my cello teacher Phillipa Jackson was so energetic and gave me such encouragement. Finally I had a teacher that got me and knew I was brimming with music. (my piano teacher up til then was appalling and although I loved piano, she had no idea how to nurture my talent!)

Q: What is Celtic cello?

A: Part of why I wanted to publish my book of Irish Airs was I was searching for Irish music for cello and couldn't find what I was looking for. There are not a huge amount of cellists playing trad cello in Ireland. There is a tradition of fiddle cello duos in Scottish music, and cellos were used in other traditional music, often as a bass, but I will sit in a session and people will tell me when they last played with a cellist (once, years ago) or that they have never played with a cellist, or that they remember me from a session 5 years ago. There should be more of it, and I like being part of the growing Celtic cello scene.

Q: Tell us about your project; "Irish Airs for Solo Cello" and how did that come about? Where and how did you find the material? *What was the idea behind the arrangements etc To find the Airs I wanted to record for my CD I listened to lots of trad music. I was especially moved by Shamus Ennis playing airs on the Uilleann pipes, and wanted to recreate some of the sounds and expression he could make from the pipes. For the arrangements I tried to find the essence of the air, and to include what it called for. Sometimes very little, sometimes variations, sometimes the sound of pipes, or fiddle, or the voice. I added harmonies where they added colour and shape. I love arranging airs and the journey is usually slow, careful, and emotionally and historically informed.*



"Irish
Airs for
Solo
Cello"



Q: What is playcellomusic.com?

www.playcellomusic.com is where I sell the sheet music for pieces I arrange. From searching through the internet and trawling music stores for solo cello repertoire, I noticed there were not enough good arrangements that were playable and also fun. I decided to start publishing my own arrangements on a website so I could share them with other cellists. There is a need for more solo cello repertoire that is a blast to play, sounds great and is enjoyable to practice. I focus on making arrangements that will push and develop a cellist to play more than the classical repertoire, and hope that the music inspires people to play, compose and arrange themselves. The pieces utilize a wide range of cello possibilities and a lot of double stops (two notes at once) and chords, which makes for a very useful yet fun way to develop technique.

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