

## Playing Celtic Music on the Hammered Dulcimer

### Introduction

In this workshop we will discuss concepts of playing Celtic music on the hammered dulcimer. We will discuss some of the common Celtic dances, and how the music has evolved around the dance. We will discuss the Irish “lilt” and how you can get that feel. We will then work on setting the right mood for slow airs and we will discuss Turlough O’Carolan’s music.

### Some Common Irish Dances Tunes

| <i>Description</i>                         | <i>Dance Time Met settings</i> | <i>Example</i>                      |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Jig 6/8 time; Jiggity, jigitty jig         | met: 100-120                   | Example: Blarney Pilgrim            |
| Reel – 4/4 time; real fast...              | met: 112-120-130               | Example: Gravel Walk                |
| Slip Jig – 9/8 time; Variation of jig      | met: 110-112                   | Example: Butterfly                  |
| Hornpipe 4/4 time; but with the right lilt | met: 80-105                    | Example: Rights of Man              |
| Polka – 2/4 time; upbeat                   | met: 70-112                    | Example: Egan’s Polka               |
| Waltz – 3/4 time; usually slower           | met: 70-100                    | Example: The Shepherds Wife’s Waltz |

Great Definitions of Irish Dances can be found here:

<http://windandroses.com/mondaycelticdances.htm>

### Other Celtic Tune Styles

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Slow Air                              | Example: Arran Boat                           |
| O’Carolan (a category unto it’s self) | Example: Shebeg and Shemore (Si’bheg Si’more) |

Many of the above tunes can be download in PDF format or Finale “.mus” format from Cliff’s hammered dulcimer page: <http://www.daybreakfolk.com/CliffCole.htm>

You can download the free Finale notepad from: <http://www.finalemusic.com/notepad/>

You can also do a Google search on the song titles and find videos, recordings and music.

Another great resource is the online version of O’Neil’s Music of Ireland:

<http://www.oldmusicproject.com/oneils1.html>

### Some “Must Listen to” CDs

| <u>Title</u>                     | <u>Artist</u>   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Banish Misfortune                | Malcolm Dalglish ( <a href="http://www.ooliticmusic.com/">http://www.ooliticmusic.com/</a> )      |
| Solas                            | Solas ( <a href="http://solasmusic.com/site/">http://solasmusic.com/site/</a> )                   |
| If Ida Been Here, Ida Been There | Croabh Rua ( <a href="http://www.craobhrua.com/">http://www.craobhrua.com/</a> )                  |
| Lúnasa                           | Otherworld ( <a href="http://www.lunasa.ie/home.php">http://www.lunasa.ie/home.php</a> )          |
| In the Tradition                 | Boys of the Lough ( <a href="http://www.boysofthelough.com/">http://www.boysofthelough.com/</a> ) |
| The World’s Room                 | Old Blind Dogs ( <a href="http://www.oldblinddogs.co.uk/">http://www.oldblinddogs.co.uk/</a> )    |
| Fit?                             | Old Blind Dogs ( <a href="http://www.oldblinddogs.co.uk/">http://www.oldblinddogs.co.uk/</a> )    |
| Where Dragons Dance              | Magical Strings ( <a href="http://www.magicalstrings.com/">http://www.magicalstrings.com/</a> )   |
| On The Burren                    | Magical Strings ( <a href="http://www.magicalstrings.com/">http://www.magicalstrings.com/</a> )   |

*Or any other CDs or recordings created by any of the above artist. This list is far from complete...*

### Book Recommendation

Karen Ashbrook's "Playing the Hammered Dulcimer in the Irish Tradition" book/CD set on Oak Publications

## About The Author

Cliff Cole purchased his first hammered dulcimer in 1985, from Sam Rizzetta. At the time he was playing drums in a blues band. Prior to taking up the dulcimer, he studied drums and percussion for ten years. Since the age of fifteen Cliff has played in numerous rock, blues, jazz, zydeco and folk ensembles. Folk instruments are where the heart is.

Cliff plays the hammered dulcimer in the family folk group “DayBreak,” which has been together since 1989. They have made several recordings, including “Lost Cave” which was recorded live inside of Lost River Caverns in Hellertown, “Little Steps”, and “Autumn Calling,” which features many of Cliff’s original tunes. They also have produced two Christmas CD's one named “Unity; Unique Music for Christmas” and a live Holiday concert recorded in December of 2002.

DayBreak’s music is available on CD-Baby, iTunes and many other digital download stores found on the web.

Cliff also sometimes plays gigs with his lovely daughter, Emily Rose under the name of “Glass Roses”. Emily has a strong, beautiful voice, which blends nicely with the dulcimer and guitar. They released a CD named Falling Wings. The CD feature’s Emily’s voice and some of her original tunes. Emily is now off too college (Mansfield University) and doesn’t have as much time to play gigs with her dad.

Cliff’s hammered dulcimer was made by James Jones. The full sized 2/16/18/7 instrument covers four octaves and has dampening pedal. For more information about James Jones instruments go to his web site:  
<http://www.jamesjonesinstruments.com>

Cliff lives with his lovely wife, Pamela, in Quakertown, Pennsylvania. He works as a computer hardware test engineer for the Q-Logic Corporation, which is located in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.

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For “DayBreak” CD’s tapes and bookings contact: Cliff Cole – **215-453-1722**([cliffcole@enter.net](mailto:cliffcole@enter.net)) Or Rob and Anna Lisa Yoder – 215-538-5280

This document can be downloaded from: <http://www.daybreakfolk.com/CliffCole.htm>