

Si Bheag Si Mhor set

(Si Bheag Si Mhor / The South Wind)

Two older tunes from the Irish.

Si Bheag Si Mhor:

From The Fiddler's Companion;

The air, according to O'Sullivan (1958) and tradition, was probably the first composed by blind Irish harper Turlough O'Carolan (1670-1738). The title of the air often appears as "Sheebag, Sheemore," an Englished version of the original Gaelic "Si Bheag, Si Mhor", which means "so big, so little," but it has been suggested that Si is derived from the medieval Irish siod, meaning "fairy hill" or "fairy mound;" thus the title may also refer to "big fairy hill, little fairy hill."

Si Bheag Si Mhor:

There is a story behind this song, according to the Fiddler's Companion;

O'Sullivan states that little is known of the author of the original Gaelic song, save that he was a native of Irrul, County Mayo, named Domnhall Meirgeach Mac Con Mara (Freckled Donal Macnamara). The late fiddler Junior Crehan (1908-1998) told a story about how the air was learned by the west Clare musicians. It seems that a ghost ship was bringing back to Ireland the souls of the Wild Geese (i.e. Irish exiles) who had been killed in battle. As the vessel proceeded around southwest Cork it was driven up the west coast by a southern breeze and the ghosts of the Wild Geese could be heard chanting this tune, which was picked up by musicians on the coast of Clare who witnessed the event. The song begins:

An Ghaoth Andeas

An ghaoth andeas na mbraon mbog glas
A ni gach faithe féarmhar
Bheir iasg ir eas is grian i dteas
Is lion is meas ar ghéagaibh
Más sios ar fad mar mbinn féin seal
Is mianach leat-sa séide
Cuirim Ri na bhFeart dhod chaomhaint ar neart
'S tu/ir don tir sin blas mo bhéil-se

The South Wind

O wind from the south with the soft clear drops
You that make every sward grassy
Bring the fish to the waterfall, give heat to the sun
And abundance of fruit to the branches
It is far to the north where I once lived
That you are minded to blow
May the King of Power preserve you in strength
And give the taste of my mouth to that country

Si Bheag Si Mhor

Waltz

(PD - Turlough O'Carolan - FF Version)

D G D Em A⁷ D D⁷
 9 G D A⁷ D G A⁷ D G D
 17 D G D A⁷ D G A⁷
 25 A⁷ D G D Em A⁷ D G D

Playing Notes: Playing Notes - first time slowly, single-strum chords, second time faster

The South Wind

Waltz (PD - Domnhall Meirgeach Mac Con Mara (Freckled Donal Macnamara) - FF Version)

Chord symbols: G, D⁷, G, C, G, C, G, D⁷, C, D⁷, G, A⁷, D, D⁷, G, A⁷, D, D⁷, G, D⁷, G, C, G.

Measure numbers: 7, 13, 19.

Triplet markings: 3.

First ending markings: 1., 2.

Playing Notes: play twice through.

From the Session;

The South Wind

South wind of the gentle rain, you banish winter weather
 Bring salmon to the pool again, the bees among the heather
 If northward now you mean to blow, as you rustle soft above me
 God speed be with you as you go and a kiss for those that love me

From south I come with velvet breeze, my word all nature blesses,
 I melt the snow and strew the leas (meadows) with flowers and warm caresses;
 I'll help you to dispel your woes, with joy I'll take your greeting
 And bear it to your loved Mayo upon my wings so fleeting.

My Connaght famed for wine and play, So leal, so gay, so loving,
 Here's my fond kiss I send today, Borne on the wind in its roving.
 These Munster folk are good and kind, Right royally they treat me,
 But this land I'd gladly leave behind, With your Connaght pipes to greet me.

Finally there is this - also from the Session;

"The "All The Tunes In The World" air is an amended version of "The South Wind" - key difference is that the original has more notes at the end of each line, and in some phrases. The song was written for Jim Daily, who would not stop playing tunes at closing time - when at last he did he would start to 'diddle' the tunes to me, while the publican told me to stop him! The publican could tell that there was no use him trying to talk sense to a fiddle player, but I play guitar so am clearly more sensible. My lyric as given above, except that I wrote and sing 'playtime is done', not 'o'er', which was Janet Russell's amendment in her wonderful recording of the song. By the way, the 'gantry' is the frame behind the bar where the bottles and glasses hang. Best regards." Ewan

All the tunes in the world (The South Wind)

(Ewan McVicar)

Lay down the borrowed guitar
 Lay down the fiddle and bow
 You'd like one more drink from the bar
 But the manager says you must go.

CHORUS:

And all the tunes in the world
 Are dancing around in your head
 But the clock on the gantry says playtime is o'er
 You'll just have to sing them instead.

Lay down the jig and the reel
 Lay down the planxty and slide
 Everyone knows how you feel
 But there's no time to take one more ride.

The barmaid has put on her coat
 And the barman has emptied the slops
 The manager's pals are afraid
 The music will bring in the cops.

Everyone here feels the same
 Oh yes, you deserve one more tune
 But you know the rules of the game
 It's time to go howl at the moon.