

Mícheál Ó Shuilleabháin

Mícheál Ó Shuilleabháin was born in 1950 and he is an Irish performer, arranger, composer and musicologist. He is a piano player and combines traditional music with both classical and jazz in his arrangements of dance tunes, airs and harp tunes. Ó Shuilleabháin plays traditional tunes on piano and improvises them in a jazz style, known as “Hiberno Jazz” such as “The Fox Chase”.

His album “Idir Eatarthu” which means between worlds, features a classical orchestra, as well as harp, fiddle, piano, flute, harpsichord, bodhrán and saxophone. The first track “Christmas Eve” begins with an introduction, which is a classical feature, on piano and bodhrán. The piano plays chords and improvises, a jazz feature, and it leads into a reel, which is the traditional Irish feature.

Another track “Crispy” contains features of modern art music as it contains changing time signatures and two motifs being repeated, which are two short melodies that are taken from Irish tunes and are repeated constantly. It contains both classical and traditional instruments with the piano, strings and bodhrán.

His other compositions include works for both classical orchestras and traditional instruments such as “Oileán/Island” which features the Irish Chamber Orchestra as well as the traditional flute. He also composed the 1995 Eurovision interval piece “Lumen” which was for voices, orchestra and traditional instruments.