

Murrough Connolly - Biography

Murrough Connolly is an award-winning composer and classical guitarist from Tralee, Co Kerry. Currently based in Manchester, He is studying for a PhD under the supervision of Prof. Camden Reeves. Murrough's earliest musical memories revolve around blues, jazz and classical guitar. During his B.Mus studies at MTU Cork School of Music, Murrough studied classical guitar with Jerry Creedon and in 2017, he was awarded the Barbara Harris Memorial Travelling Scholarship. A traumatic wrist injury in October 2017 resulted in a hiatus from guitar playing for more than a year. During this time, he turned his attention to composing and his piece "Cataract" was premiered by the Irish Guitar Quartet in the National Concert Hall in May 2018.

With a newfound purpose, Murrough pursued an M.Mus degree in Composition at the University of Manchester. Under the supervision of Prof. Philip Grange, Murrough began to develop a unique style which infused his innate love for blues music with contemporary harmonic practices. He is currently in his final year of a PhD in Composition at Manchester, where his work seeks to explore the concept of harmonic colour and challenge conventional harmonic practices. Several of his recent compositions have been inspired by the connection between visual colours and harmonic colour. His current research strives to reveal a rich harmonic sound-world by combining two mutually exclusive musical phenomena: twelve-tone equal temperament and the overtone series.

Murrough's music has been widely performed by outstanding performers and ensembles across the UK and Ireland, including: Psappha Ensemble, Quatuor Danel, The Carducci Quartet, Katherine Hunka, Somnium Chamber Choir, The Scotia Ensemble and The Irish Guitar Quartet. These performances have resulted in exciting commissions to write music for the UCC Singers and The Kerry School of Music. His violin duo, *Imperium*, was commissioned by the 2022 SCS Killaloe Music Festival and broadcast by RTE Lyric FM on 'The Full Score with Liz Nolan' Show on 15 May 2023.

In 2022, Murrough was selected for Psappha Ensemble's 'Composing for Piano' Scheme and the Peter Reynolds Composer Studio, a one-week composer residency run by the Vale of Glamorgan Festival. In 2023, he was one of three composers to win the West Cork Chamber Music Festival Composition Competition with his string quartet, *Ildaite*. He was also a finalist in Festival Musical Durtal's International Piano Composition Competition.

Education has become an important and fulfilling part of Murrough's musical career. A passionate guitarist, he teaches jazz and classical guitar to all ages on a freelance basis. Murrough is in his second year as a teaching assistant at the University of Manchester, where he teaches harmony, counterpoint and composition to undergraduate students.

Murrough is an associate composer represented by the Contemporary Music Centre of Ireland (CMC). His work is documented and disseminated as part of their collection.