

Inisheer (Inis Oírr)

Thomas Walsh

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff contains the first four measures with chords G, Em, C, and D. The second staff contains the next four measures with chords G, Em, C, D, followed by a first ending (1. G) and a second ending (2. G). The third staff contains the next four measures with chords Em, Bm, Em, and C. The fourth staff contains the final four measures with chords Em, G, D, followed by a first ending (1. G) and a second ending (2. G).

arr. Peter McLaren

Composed in the 1970's by Dublin accordion player Thomas Walsh after returning from a visit to Inis Oírr (Inisheer), the eastern-most of the three Aran Islands off the coast of Galway. His tune was an attempt to capture the deep sense of peace that he'd experienced on the island.

Here is Tommy's own account: 'I composed 'Inisheer' after spending the best holiday of my life on the island. There was no electricity on the island at that time, which was new to a Dub like me. I found the people and the island had something special which I never experienced before. I went for three days and came home three weeks later, due to a lack of money. I composed 'Inisheer' the next day while I was walking in the Phoenix Park dreaming of what I had left behind, and the peace and tranquility it gave me.'

'Inisheer' is the 'Anglisied' form of the Irish names for the eastern-most (and smallest) of the three Aran Islands off the coast of Co. Galway in the west of Ireland. The three islands are Inishmore (Inis Mór) the largest and western-most; Inishmaan (Inis Meáin) the centre-most; and Inisheer (Inis Oírr, the 'official' name – traditionally called Inis Oirthir and Inis Thiar).