Celtic Music
The Glendalough Mass
Liam Lawton
Arranged by Paul A. Tate
Who are the Celts?
The Bards and the Harps
Styles of Celtic Music

- Goltraige - sad tunes, laments
- Gentraige - joyful tune, dance tunes, celebratory
- Suantraige - lullabies, sleep-inducing, relaxing
Christian Influence

-monastic chant: singing the psalms

Norman French Influence

-chanson: lyric driven songs of courtly love or of the exploits of famous men
Music of the Dispossessed

- sean nós
- ballad
- traditional dance music
- lilting
Traditional Music

- uses traditional instruments (harp, tin whistle, fiddle, orchestral flute, uilleann pipes) or orchestral instruments or instruments from other traditions adapted to the tradition

- tends to be improvisational and arrangements are made "on the fly"

- musicians tend to sing or play either solo or in unison rather than polyphonically

- tunes are learned by listening to others playing rather than by written music,

- tunes are freely adapted by the player

- players frequently don't play a tune the same way each time

- trad players usually play in D, G, A, Em, Am, or C because it lays on the instruments better

- tunes don't have standard musical dynamics, rather apply ornamentation to give a traditional feel

- each instrument is ornamented in a way that suits the instrument
Celtic Vocal Performance

unaccompanied (the ornamentation is the accompaniment)

- melisma (rolling a syllable through several notes) usually at the top of the range

- nasal voicing

- varying the melody in each verse of the song slightly

- rhythmic variation (well)

- performer often needs to be encouraged to sing

- traditional performers perform for each other or for themselves, sometimes seeming to ignore the audience.

- the audience is not passive, often helps by saying encouraging things during the piece and finishing phrases.
A Thiarna déan trócaire.
A Chríost déan trócaire.
A Thiarna déan trócaire.

(ah hearnah den troe-kare-uh)
(ah kreest den troe-kare-uh)
(ah hearnah den troe-kare-uh)
Seinn Alleluia

(shine al-leh-lue-a-yah)
Óro sé do bheatha abhaile

(oh roe shay duh vah-hah wahl-yeh)
Ag Criost An Siol, Ag Criost and fomhar
Christ is the seed, Christ is the harvest

In-Iothlainn De, go dtugtar Sinn
In the granary of God, may we be brought

Ag Criost an Mhuir, ag Criost an t-iase
Christ is the sea, Christ is the fish

Ilionta De go gcastar sinn,
In the lines of God may we be entwined.

O fhas go h-aois, is o aois go bas
From growth to age and from age to death

Do dha laimh a Chriost anall tharainn
Your two hands o Christ around us.

O bhas go crioich, ni crioich ach athfhas
From death to the end, not the end, but new life

I bParrthas na nGrast go rabhaimid
In paradise of the blessed may we reside.
Traditional Irish Dance
Singing Tradition