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Vocal Chords:

The Odyssey of the Voice with Iarla Ó'Lionáird.

Athena Media/ RTE Lyric FM/Broadcasting Authority of Ireland

A radio feature series

RTE Lyric FM, 7p.m. Friday May 1st to Friday May 29th 2015

Press Note:

Vocal Chords is a five part music documentary series for RTE Lyric FM presented by acclaimed sean nós singer, **Iarla Ó'Lionáird** from **The Gloaming**. In a global journey Iarla explores whether singing is man's primary means of communication and why we sing in both times of joy and sorrow. In a vocal landscape from the sean nós tradition in Ireland, to the Zulu Mbube music of South Africa, Iarla talks to outstanding performers including **Peter Gabriel, Sinéad O'Connor, Christy Moore, Frances Black**, and **Maria Pomianowska** to uncover the story behind song, singing and the unique vocal styles of the world. This series takes listeners on a rich audio experience while addressing the simple but vital question, *'What happens when you sing and why do we sing?'*

This global voyage of the voice features recordings and song performances from across the world and features artists including the Russian/Yiddish Singer **Polina Shepherd**, the Conductor and singer with *'Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares'* **Dora Hristova** and the Sami folk singer **Niillas Holmberg**. The series is shaped by Iarla's personal quest to uncover the power of the human voice in song; its power to move, console us, to bind and heal us.

Is singing our primary language, is it what unites us before words divide us and why do we sing in both times of joy and sorrow?

This odyssey of the human voice is told through **Iarla Ó'Lionáird's** own artistic journey, from his sean nós roots in an Irish speaking community in Cúil Aodha, Co. Cork, to the rise of the award-winning ensemble **The Gloaming**. His story is amplified by those fellow singers he

meets along the way including **Treasa Ní Mhoilláin**, **Steve Byrne** and **Julie Fowlis** who explore, with him, the healing power of song, its deep rooted connections to home, identity, language and memory. As Scots singer **Steve Byrne** says, *“We don’t just talk about the songs in isolation we give them a thought train to work with about memory and remembering, and if lots of people remember the same thing it doesn’t get forgotten”*

The series producer is Helen Shaw. The audio editor/producer is Amy Millar.

Recordists are Robert Hope, Michael Gallen, and Catherine O’Mahony

Vocal Chords is made with the funding support of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and the TV licence fee.

You can follow the full story behind the series on its website www.vocalchords.ie and the global soundscape of vocal chords on its audioboom channel

<https://audioboom.com/playlists/1263282-vocal-chords>

For more information on the series contact Amy Millar at 01 4893660, amy@athenamedia.ie