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Vocal Chords: Iarla Ó Lionáird In Conversation with Paul Brady

RTÉ Lyric fm: THE LYRIC FEATURE December 23rd 7pm

'As I've got older, and as I've got freer in myself, I enjoy now...being dramatic with the songs, and being the character in the songs, and almost you know declaiming them rather than just sort of religiously singing them' - **Paul Brady**

Iarla Ó Lionáird meets fellow singer Paul Brady to explore his life's journey in song, singing and songwriting.

Brady charts over 50 years in performance from his roots in Strabane and Donegal, to the early days with bands like 'The Johnstons' and 'Planxty' to later writing hit songs like 'Steel Claw' and "Beautiful World". He shares the joy of singing and the story behind crafting songs like 'Nothing But The Same Old Story' and 'Hard Station' as well as his approach to shaping definitive versions of traditional songs like 'Arthur McBride' and 'The Lakes of Pontchartrain'.

Paul Brady was born in Belfast in May 1947 and in this intimate and extensive music documentary he shares his life in music from his parents, who were both singers and teachers, to his student days in Dublin absorbing traditional music, rock n' roll and the blues.

Brady joined, and toured with, folk band 'The Johnstons' who had a hit with Joni Mitchell's 'Both Sides Now' in 1968 and later became part of the legendary band 'Planxty' and began collaborating with Dónal Lunny and Andy Irvine – a musical collaboration which continues today.

Iarla Ó Lionáird describes Brady's groundbreaking album 'Welcome Here Kind Stranger' (1978) as one of his all time favourite albums. "I've got a version of it in every format, vinyl, CD, digital" and says that while Brady came to traditional music later he went on to excel in it before crossing and mixing genres.

As a musician Brady is always exploring, always learning and always changing. His stage performance is, he says, influenced by his late father.

“I mean I loved seeing him perform. I just loved it. He’d have a room in his hand and he would have them in tears and he’d look at me and he’d wink at me afterwards you know....”

Vocal Chords in Conversation with Paul Brady: How Do you write songs?



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Listen here to a clip from our interview with Paul Brady as part of the Vocal Chords series. You'll be able to hear the full programme on the 23rd of December at 7pm on RTÉ Lyric fm.

[Listen to the trailer](#)



[Hear Paul Brady Performing 'Beautiful World'](#)

While Brady celebrates his 70th birthday in 2017 he's still hungry to perform and to keep making music:

"I want to keep making music but I almost don't want to be part of the music business anymore. I just want to live outside it... I love performing yeah, I do, but I don't like a lot of the hoo-ha you have to go through to finally get on the stage you know, I mean if I could - if I could just be beam me up Scotty onto the stage without all the shit beforehand you know."

Vocal Chords: Iarla Ó Lionáird In Conversation with Paul Brady is an Athena Media production for RTÉ lyric fm made with the funding support of the BAI and the TV licence fee. The strand won Gold at the New York Radio Festival in 2016 and previous guests include Christy Moore, Peter Gabriel, Sinead O'Connor and Julie Fowlis.

The producer is **Helen Shaw** and the audio editor is **Pearse Ó Caoimh**.

Visit www.vocalchords.ie for more background on the series and to hear previous episodes. Visit www.paulbrady.com for upcoming gigs and music news from Paul Brady.